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LEIGH HUNT.

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THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

LEIGH HUNT,

WITH

REMINISCENCES

OF FRIENDS AND CONTEMPORARIES.

"Most men, when drawn to speak about themselves,
Are mov'd by little and little to say more
Than they first dreamt; until at last they blush,
And can but hope to find secret excuse
In the self-knowledge of their auditors."

WALTER SCOTT'S *Old Play.*

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXAMINER.

Establishment of the *Examiner*.—Albany Fonblanque.—Author's mistakes in setting out in his editorial career.—Objects of the *Examiner*, and misrepresentations of them by the Tories.—*Jeu-d'esprit* of "Napoleon in his Cabinet."—"Breakfast Sympathies with the Miseries of War."—War dispassionately considered.—Anti-Republicanism of the *Examiner*, and its views in theology.—The Author for some time a clerk in the War Office.—His patron, Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth.—Poetry and Accounts..... 1

CHAPTER X.

LITERARY ACQUAINTANCE.

Dr. Trotter.—Campbell.—Theodore Hook.—Matthews.—James and Horace Smith.—Fuseli.—Bonnycastle.—Kinnaird, [illegible]

CHAPTER XI.

POLITICAL CHARACTERS.

[illegible] of the Parties.—Time-serving conduct of the Allies.—[illegible] and downfall of Napoleon.—Character of George the Third.

—Mistakes and sincerity of the *Examiner*.—Indictment against it respecting the case of Major Hogan.—Affair of Mrs. Clarke.—Indictment respecting the reign of George the Third.—Perry, proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*.—Character of Lord Canning, Liverpool, and Lord Castlereagh.—Whigs and Whig-Radicals.—Queen Victoria.—Royalty and Republics.—Indictment respecting military flogging.—The Attorney-General, Sir Vicary Gibbs 45

CHAPTER XII.

LITERARY WARFARE.

The *Reflector* and the writers in it.—*Feast of the Poets*.—Its attack on Gifford for his attack on Mrs. Robinson.—Character of Gifford and his Writings.—Specimens of the *Baviad and Mœviad*.—His appearance at the Roxburgh Sale of Books.—Attack on Walter Scott, occasioned by a passage in his edition of Dryden.—Tory Calumny.—Quarrels and recriminations of authors.—The writer's present opinion of Sir Walter.—General offence caused by the *Feast of the Poets*.—Its inconsiderate treatment of Hayley.—Dinner of the Prince Regent.—Holland House and Lord Holland.—Neutralization of Whig advocacy.—Recollections of Blanco White 83

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REGENT AND THE EXAMINER.

"The Prince on St. Patrick's Day."—Indictment for an attack on the Regent in that article.—Present feelings of the writer on the subject.—Real sting of the offence in the article.—Sentence of the proprietors of the *Examiner* to an imprisonment for two years.—Their rejection of two proposals of compromise.—Lord Ellenborough, Mr. Garrow, and Mr. Justice Grose 114

CHAPTER XIV.

IMPRISONMENT.

Author's imprisonment.—Curious specimen of a jailer, and under-jailer, and an under-jailer's wife.—Mr. Holme Sumner.—Conversion of a room in a prison into a fairy bower.—Author's visitors.—A heart-rending spectacle.—Felons and debtors.—Restoration to Freedom 136

CHAPTER XV.

FREE AGAIN.—SHELLEY IN ENGLAND.

Dignified neighbour and landlord.—Visits from Lord Byron and Mr. Wordsworth.—Infernal conduct of the angels in *Paradise Lost*.—Return of hypochondria.—Descent of liberty.—*Story of Rimini*.—United States.—Visits to Lord Byron.—History of Shelley while in England 160

CHAPTER XVI.

KEATS, LAMB, AND COLERIDGE.

Charles Cowden Clarke.—Keats and Shelley.—Mr. Monckton Milnes's Letters and Remains of Keats.—"Other-worldliness."—Armitage Brown.—Keats and Lamb.—Wordsworth on Shelley.—Milton dining.—Keats and Byron.—Keats in Italy.—His death and personal appearance.—"Foliage."—The *Indicator*.—Tasso's *Aminta*.—Foolish ignorance of business.—Mr. Lockhart.—Personal appearance of Lamb.—Character of his genius.—His bon-mots and imaginary notices of his friends.—Person of Coleridge.—Character of his genius.—Coleridge and Hazlitt.—Coleridge's conversation and daily habits 201

CHAPTER XVII.

VOYAGE TO ITALY.

Reasons of the Author's voyage to Italy.—Desiderata in accounts of voyagers.—Gunpowder.—Setting off.—Noisy navigation of small vessels.—Cabin and berths.—Sea-captains.—Deal pilots and boatmen.—Putting in at Ramsgate.—Condorcet's "*Progress of Society*."—A French vessel and its occupants.—Setting off again.—Memorable stormy season.—Character of the captain and mate.—Luigi Rivarola.—Notices of the sailors.—Watching at night.—Discomforts of sea in winter.—A drunken cook.—A goat and ducks.—Hypochondria.—Dullness and superstition of sailors.—A gale of fifty-six hours 230

CHAPTER XVIII.

RETURN TO FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH LORD BYRON AND THOMAS MOORE.

First sight of Lord Byron.—Jackson the prize-fighter.—Bathing at Westminster.—Sympathy with early poems.—More prison recollections.—Lord Byron and the House of Peers.—Thomas Moore and the *Liberal*.—Mistaken conclusions of his.—His appearance, manners, and opinions.—Letters of Lord Byron 308

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LEIGH HUNT.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXAMINER.

Establishment of the Examiner. — *Albany Fonblanque.* — *Author's mistakes in setting out in his editorial career.* — *Objects of the* Examiner, *and misrepresentations of them by the Tories.* — Jeu-d'esprit *of "Napoleon in his Cabinet."* — *"Breakfast Sympathies with the Miseries of War."* — *War dispassionately considered.* — *Anti-Republicanism of the* Examiner, *and its views in theology.* — *The Author for some time a clerk in the War Office.* — *His patron, Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth.* — *Poetry and Accounts.*

At the beginning of the year 1808, my brother John and myself set up the weekly paper of the *Examiner* in joint partnership. It was named after the *Examiner* of Swift and his brother Tories. I did not think of their politics. I thought only of their wit and fine writing, which, in my youthful confidence, I proposed to myself to emulate; and I could find no previous political journal equally qualified to be

its godfather. Even Addison had called his opposition paper the *Whig Examiner*.

Some dozen years afterwards I had an editorial successor, Mr. Fonblanque, who had all the wit for which I toiled, without making any pretensions to it. He was, indeed, the genuine successor, not of me, but of the Swifts and Addisons themselves; profuse of wit even beyond them, and superior in political knowledge. Yet, if I laboured hard for what was so easy to Mr. Fonblanque, I will not pretend to think that I did not sometimes find it; and the study of Addison and Steele, of Goldsmith and Voltaire, enabled me, when I was pleased with my subject, to give it the appearance of ease. At other times, especially on serious occasions, I too often got into a declamatory vein, full of what I thought fine turns and Johnsonian antithesis. The new office of editor conspired with my success as a critic to turn my head. I wrote, though anonymously, in the first person, as if, in addition to my theatrical pretensions, I had suddenly become an oracle in politics; the words philosophy, poetry, criticism, statesmanship, nay, even ethics and theology, all took a final tone in my lips; and when I consider the virtue as well as knowledge which I demanded from everybody whom I had occasion to speak of, and of how much charity my own juvenile errors ought to have considered themselves in need

(however they might have been warranted by conventional allowance), I will not say I was a hypocrite in the odious sense of the word, for it was all done out of a spirit of foppery and "fine writing," and I never affected any formal virtues in private; but when I consider all the nonsense and extravagance of those assumptions—all the harm they must have done me in discerning eyes, and all the reasonable amount of resentment which it was preparing for me with adversaries, I blush to think what a simpleton I was, and how much of the consequences I deserved. It is out of no "ostentation of candour" that I make this confession. It is extremely painful to me.

Suffering gradually worked me out of a good deal of this kind of egotism. I hope that even the present most involuntarily egotistical book affords evidence that I am pretty well rid of it; and I must add, in my behalf, that, in every other respect, never, at that time or at any after time, was I otherwise than an honest man. I overrated my claims to public attention; I greatly overdid the manner of addressing it; and I was not too abundant in either; but I set out perhaps with as good an editorial amount of qualification as most writers no older. I was fairly grounded in English history; I had carefully read De Lolme and Blackstone; I had no mercenary views whatsoever, though I was a proprietor of the

journal; and all the levity of my animal spirits, and the foppery of the graver part of my pretensions, had not destroyed in me that spirit of manliness which had been inculcated in me from the cradle. I denied myself political as well as theatrical acquaintances; I was the reverse of a speculator upon patronage or employment; and I was prepared, with my excellent brother, to suffer manfully, should the time for suffering arrive.

The spirit of the criticism on the theatres continued the same as it had been in the *News*. In politics, from old family associations, I soon got interested as a man, though I never could love them as a writer. It was against the grain that I was encouraged to begin them; and against the grain I ever afterwards sat down to write, except when the subject was of a very general description, and I could introduce philosophy and the belles lettres.

The main objects of the *Examiner* newspaper were to assist in producing Reform in Parliament, liberality of opinion in general (especially freedom from superstition), and a fusion of literary taste into all subjects whatsoever. It began with being of no party; but Reform soon gave it one. It disclaimed all knowledge of statistics; and the rest of its politics were rather a sentiment, and a manner of training, than founded on any particular political reflection. It possessed the benefit, however, of a good deal of

general reading. It never wanted examples out of history and biography, or a kind of adornment from the spirit of literature; and it gradually drew to its perusal many intelligent persons of both sexes, who would, perhaps, never have attended to politics under any other circumstances.

In the course of its warfare with the Tories, the *Examiner* was charged with Bonaparteism, with republicanism, with disaffection to Church and State, with conspiracy at the tables of Burdett, and Cobbett, and Henry Hunt. Now Sir Francis, though he was for a long time our hero, we never exchanged a word with; and Cobbett and Henry Hunt (no relation of ours) we never beheld;—never so much as saw their faces. I was never even at a public dinner; nor do I believe my brother was. We had absolutely no views whatsoever, but those of a decent competence and of the public good; and we thought, I dare affirm, a great deal more of the latter than of the former. Our competence we allowed too much to shift for itself. Zeal for the public good was a family inheritance; and this we thought ourselves bound to increase. As to myself, what I thought of, more than either, was the making of verses. I did nothing for the greater part of the week but write verses and read books. I then made a rush at my editorial duties; took a world of superfluous pains in the writing; sat up late at night, and was a very trying

person to compositors and newsmen. I sometimes have before me the ghost of a pale and gouty printer whom I specially caused to suffer, and who never complained. I think of him and of some needy dramatist, and wish they had been worse men.

The *Examiner* commenced at the time when Bonaparte was at the height of his power. He had the continent at his feet; and three of his brothers were on thrones. The reader may judge of our Bonapartist tendencies by the following dramatic sketch, which appeared in the first number:—

NAPOLEON IN HIS CABINET.

SCENE,—*A Cabinet at St. Cloud.*

NAPOLEON. [*Ruminating before a fire and grasping a poker.*] Who waits there?

LE M. May it please your Majesty, your faithful soldier, Le Meurtrier.

NAP. Tell Sultan Mustapha that he is the last of the Sultans.

LE M. Yes, sire.

NAP. And, hark ye—desire the king of Holland to come to me directly.

LE M. Yes, sire.

NAP. And the king of Westphalia.—[*Aside*] I must tweak Jerome by the nose a little, to teach him dignity.

LE M. [*With hesitation.*] M. Champagny, sire, waits to know your Majesty's pleasure respecting the king of Sweden.

NAP. Oh—tell him, I'll let the boy alone for a month or two. And stay, Le Meurtrier; go to the editor of the *Moniteur*, and tell him to dethrone the queen of Portugal.—Spain's dethronement is put off to next year. Where's Bienseance?

[*Exit* LE MEURTRIER, *and enter* BIENSEANCE.

BIEN. May it please your august majesty, Bienseance is before you.

NAP. Fetch me General F.'s head, and a cup of coffee.

BIEN. [*Smiling with devotion.*] Every syllable uttered by the great Napoleon convinces Frenchmen that he is their father.

[*Exit* BIENSEANCE.

NAP. [*Meditating with ferocity.*] After driving the Turks out of Europe [*pokes the fire*], I must annihilate England [*gives a furious poke*]; but first—I shall over-run India; then I shall request America and Africa to put themselves under my protection; and after making that great jackass, the Russian Emperor, one of my tributaries, crown myself emperor of the east—west—north—and south. Then I must have a balloon army, of which Garnerin shall be field-marshal; for I must positively take possession of the comet, because it makes a noise. That will assist me to conquer the solar system; and then I shall go with my army to the other systems; and then—I think—I shall go to the devil.——

I thought of Bonaparte at that time as I have thought ever since; to-wit, that he was a great soldier, and little else; that he was not a man of the highest order of intellect, much less a cosmopolite; that he was a retrospective rather than a prospec-

tive man, ambitious of old renown instead of new; and would advance the age as far, and no farther, as suited his views of personal aggrandizement. The *Examiner*, however much it differed with the military policy of Bonaparte's antagonists, or however meanly it thought of their understandings, never overrated his own, or was one of his partizans. What it thought of war and conquest in general may be gathered from another *jeu-d'esprit*,—a jest, like many another jest, with laughter on its lips, and melancholy at heart. It was entitled, *Breakfast Sympathies with the Miseries of War.*

TWO GENTLEMEN AND A LADY AT BREAKFAST.

A. [*Reading the newspaper, and eating at every two or three words.*] "The combat lasted twelve hours.....and the two armies separated at nine in the evening.....leaving 30,000 men literally cut to pieces!" (another piece of toast, if you please) "on the field of".....Stop, 30,000 is it? [*looking at the paper closely.*] Egad, I believe, it's 50,000. Tom, is that a three or a five?—Oh, a five. That paper's horridly printed.

A. Very indeed.—Well, "leaving 50,000 men on the field of battle."—50,000!—that's a great number to be killed with the bayonet, eh! War's a horrid [*sips*] thing.

THE LADY. Oh, shocking! [*Takes a large bit of toast.*]

B. Oh, monstrous! [*Takes a larger.*]

A. [*Reading on.*] "One of the French generals of division riding up to the emperor with a sabre covered with blood, after a charge of cavalry, exclaimed,"—stick your fork into that slice of ham for me, Tom—thanky'e—" exclaimed,—There is not a

man in my regiment whose sword is not like this. The two armi——"

B. What? What was that about the sword?

A. Why, his own sword, you know, was covered with blood. Didn't you hear me read it? And so he said, There is not a ——

B. Ay, ay—whose sword is not like this. I understand you. Gad, what a fellow!

A. [*Sips.*] Oh, horrid!

THE LADY. [*Sips.*] Oh, shocking!—*Dash*, get down? how can you be so?

A. The two armi——

B. By-the-bye, have you heard of Mrs. W.'s accident?

A. AND THE LADY. [*Putting down their cups.*] No! what can it be?

A. Poor thing! her husband's half mad, I suppose.

B. Why, she has broken her arm.

THE LADY. Good God! I declare you've made me quite sick. Poor dear Mrs. W.! Why she'll be obliged to wear her arm in a sling! But she would go out this slippery weather, when the frost's enough to kill one.

B. Well, I must go and tell my father the news. Let's see—how many men killed, Charles?

A. 50,000.

B. Ah,—50,000. Good-morning. [*Exit.*]

THE LADY. Poor dear Mrs. W., I can't help thinking about her. A broken arm! Why, it's quite a dreadful thing. I wonder whether Mrs. F. has heard the news.

B. She'll see it in this morning's paper, you know.

LADY. Oh, what it's in the paper, is it?

B. [*Laughing.*] Why, didn't you hear Charles read it just now?

LADY. Oh, that news. No, I mean poor Mrs. W. Poor dear! [*meditating*] I wonder whether she'll wear a black sling or a blue.* [*Exeunt.*]

I now look upon war as one of the fleeting necessities of things in the course of human progress; as an evil (like all other evils) to be regarded in relation to some other evil that would have been worse without it, but always to be considered as an indication of comparative barbarism—as a necessity, the perpetuity of which is not to be assumed or encouraged—or as a half reasoning mode of adjustment, whether of disputes, or of populations, which mankind, on arriving at years of discretion, and coming to a better understanding with one another, may, and must of necessity, do away. It would be as ridiculous to associate the idea of war with an earth covered with railroads and commerce, as a fight between Holborn and the Strand, or between people met in a drawing-room. Wars, like all other evils, have not been without their good. They have pioneered human intercourse; have thus prepared even for their own eventual abolition; and their follies, losses, and horrors have been made the best of by adornments and music, and consoled by the exhibition of many noble qualities. There is no evil unmixed with, or

* *Examiner*, vol. i. p. 748.

unproductive of good. It could not, in the nature of things, exist. Antagonism itself prevents it. But nature incites us to the diminution of evil; and while it is pious to make the best of what is inevitable, it is no less so to obey the impulse which she has given us towards thinking and making it otherwise.

With respect to the charge of republicanism against the *Examiner*, it was as ridiculous as the rest. Both Napoleon and the Allies did, indeed, so conduct themselves on the high roads of empire and royalty, and the British sceptre was at the same time so unfortunately wielded, that kings and princes were often treated with less respect in our pages than we desired. But we generally felt and often expressed a wish to treat them otherwise. The *Examiner* was always quoting against them the Alfreds and Antoninuses of old. The "Constitution," with its King, Lords, and Commons, was its incessant watchword. The greatest political change which it desired was Reform in Parliament; and it helped to obtain it, because it was in earnest. As to republics, the United States, notwithstanding our family relationship, were no favourites with us, owing to their love of money and their want of the imaginative and ornamental; and the excesses of the French Revolution we held in abhorrence.

With regard to Church and State, the connection

was of course duly recognised by admirers of the English constitution. We desired, it is true, reform in both, being far greater admirers of Christianity in its primitive than in any of its subsequent shapes, and hearty accorders with the dictum of the apostle, who said that the "letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Our version of religious faith was ever nearer to what M. Lamartine has called the "New Christianity," than to that of Doctors Horsley and Philpotts. But we heartily advocated the mild spirit of religious government, as exercised by the Church of England, in opposition to the bigoted part of dissent; and in furtherance of this advocacy, the first volume of the *Examiner* contained a series of *Essays on the Folly and Danger of Methodism*, which were afterwards collected into a pamphlet. So "orthodox" were these essays, short of points from which common sense and humanity always appeared to us to revolt, and from which the deliverance of the Church itself is now, I believe, not far off, that in duty to our hope of that deliverance, I afterwards thought it necessary to guard against the conclusions which might have been drawn from them, as to the amount of our assent. A church appeared to me then, as it still does, an instinctive want in the human family. I never to this day pass one, even of a kind the most unreformed, without a wish to go into it and join my fellow-creatures in their affecting

evidence of the necessity of an additional tie with Deity and Infinity, with this world and the next. But the wish is accompanied with an afflicting regret that I cannot recognise it, free from barbarisms derogatory to both; and I sigh for some good old country church, finally delivered from the corruptions of the Councils, and breathing nothing but the peace and love befitting the Sermon on the Mount. I believe that a time is coming, when such doctrine, and such only, will be preached; and my future grave, by some old ivied tower, seems quieter for the consummation. But I anticipate.

For a short period before and after the setting up of the *Examiner*, I was a clerk in the War Office. The situation was given me by Mr. Addington, then prime minister, afterwards Lord Sidmouth, who knew my father. My sorry stock of arithmetic, which I taught myself on purpose, was sufficient for the work which I had to do; but otherwise I made a bad clerk; wasting my time and that of others in perpetual jesting; going too late to office; and feeling conscious that if I did not quit the situation myself, nothing was more likely, or would have been more just, than a suggestion to that effect from others. The establishment of the *Examiner*, and the tone respecting the count and the ministry which I soon thought myself bound to adopt, increased the sense of the propriety of this measure; and, accordingly,

I sent in my resignation. Mr. Addington had fortunately ceased to be minister before the *Examiner* was set up; and though I had occasion afterwards to differ extremely with the measures approved of by him as Lord Sidmouth, I never forgot the personal respect which I owed him for his kindness to myself, to his own amiable manners, and to his undoubted, though not wise, conscientiousness. He had been Speaker of the House of Commons, a situation for which his figure and deportment at that time of life admirably fitted him. I think I hear his fine voice, in his house at Richmond Park, good-naturedly expressing to me his hope, in the words of the poet, that it might one day be said of me,—

> "— Not in fancy's maze he wander'd long,
> But stoop'd to truth, and moraliz'd his song."

The sounding words, "moralized his song," came *toning* out of his dignified utterance like "sonorous metal." This was when I went to thank him for the clerkship. I afterwards sat on the grass in the park, feeling as if I was in a dream, and wondering how I should reconcile my propensity to verse-making with sums in addition. The minister, it was clear, thought them not incompatible: nor are they. Let nobody think otherwise, unless he is prepared to suffer for the mistake, and what is worse, to make others suffer. The body of the British Poets them-

selves shall confute him, with Chaucer at their head, who was a "comptroller of wool" and "clerk of works."

"Thou hearest neither that nor this,"

(says the eagle to him in the House of Fame),—

For when thy labour all done is,
And hast made *all thy reckonings*,
Instead of rest and of new things,
Thou goest home to thine house anon,
And all so dumb as any stone
Thou sittest at another book,
Till fully dazèd is thy look."

Lamb, it is true, though he stuck to it, has complained of

"The dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood;"

and how Chaucer contrived to settle his accounts in the month of May, when, as he tells us, he could not help passing whole days in the fields, looking at the daisies, his biographers do not inform us. The case, as in all other matters, can only be vindicated, or otherwise, by the consequences. But that is a perilous responsibility; and it involves assumptions which ought to be startling to the modesty of young rhyming gentlemen not in the receipt of an income.

I did not give up, however, a certainty for an uncertainty. The *Examiner* was fully established when I quitted the office. My friends thought that I

should be better able to attend to it; and it was felt, at any rate, that I could not with propriety remain. So I left my fellow-clerks to their better behaviour and quieter rooms; and set my face in the direction of stormy politics.

CHAPTER X.

LITERARY ACQUAINTANCE.

Du Bois.—Campbell.—Theodore Hook.—Mathews.—James and Horace Smith.—Fuseli.—Bonnycastle.—Kinnaird, &c.

JUST after this period I fell in with a new set of acquaintances, accounts of whom may not be uninteresting. I forget what it was that introduced me to Mr. Hill, proprietor of the *Monthly Mirror;* but at his house at Sydenham I used to meet his editor, Du Bois; Thomas Campbell, who was his neighbour; and the two Smiths, authors of *The Rejected Addresses.* I saw also Theodore Hook, and Mathews the comedian. Our host was a jovial bachelor, plump and rosy as an abbot; and no abbot could have presided over a more festive Sunday. The wine flowed merrily and long; the discourse kept pace with it; and next morning, in returning to town, we felt ourselves very thirsty. A pump by the road-side, with a plash round it, was a bewitching sight.

Du Bois was one of those wits, who, like the

celebrated Eachard, have no faculty of gravity. His handsome hawk's eyes looked blank at a speculation; but set a joke or a piece of raillery in motion, and they sparkled with wit and malice. Nothing could be more trite or commonplace than his serious observations. Acquiescences they should rather have been called; for he seldom ventured upon a gravity, but in echo of another's remark. If he did, it was in defence of orthodoxy, of which he was a great advocate; but his quips and cranks were infinite. He was also an excellent scholar. He, Dr. King, and Eachard, would have made a capital trio over a table, for scholarship, mirth, drinking and religion. He was intimate with Sir Philip Francis, and gave the public a new edition of the Horace of Sir Philip's father. The literary world knew him well also as the writer of a popular novel in the genuine Fielding manner, entitled *Old Nick.*

Mr. Du Bois held his editorship of the *Monthly Mirror* very cheap. He amused himself with writing notes on Athenæus, and was a lively critic on the theatres; but half the jokes in his magazine were written for his friends, and must have mystified the uninitiated. His notices to correspondents were often made up of this by-play; and made his friends laugh, in proportion to their obscurity to every one else. Mr. Du Bois subsequently became a magistrate in the Court of Requests; and died [illegible]

day at an advanced age, in spite of his love of port. But then he was festive in good taste; no gourmand; and had a strong head withal. I do not know whether such men ever last as long as teatotallers; but they certainly last as long, and look a great deal younger, than the carking and severe.

They who knew Mr. Campbell only as the author of *Gertrude of Wyoming*, and the *Pleasures of Hope*, would not have suspected him to be a merry companion, overflowing with humour and anecdote, and anything but fastidious. These Scotch poets have always something in reserve. It is the only point in which the major part of them resemble their countrymen. The mistaken character which the lady formed of Thomson from his *Seasons* is well known. He let part of the secret out in his *Castle of Indolence;* and the more he let out, the more honour it did to the simplicity and cordiality of the poet's nature, though not always to the elegance of it. Allan Ramsay knew his friends Gay and Somerville as well in their writings, as he did when he came to be personally acquainted with them; but Allan, who had bustled up from a barber's shop into a bookseller's, was "a cunning shaver;" and nobody would have guessed the author of the *Gentle Shepherd* to be penurious. Let none suppose that any insinuation to that effect is intended against Campbell. He was one of the few men whom I could at any time have

walked half a dozen miles through the snow to spend an evening with; and I could no more do this with a penurious man than I could with a sulky one. I know but of one fault he had, besides an extreme cautiousness in his writings, and that one was national, a matter of words, and amply overpaid by a stream of conversation, lively, piquant, and liberal, not the less interesting for occasionally betraying an intimacy with pain, and for a high and somewhat strained tone of voice, like a man speaking with suspended breath, and in the habit of subduing his feelings. No man felt more kindly towards his fellow-creatures, or took less credit for it. When he indulged in doubt and sarcasm, and spoke contemptuously of things in general, he did it, partly, no doubt, out of actual dissatisfaction, but more perhaps than he suspected, out of a fear of being thought weak and sensitive; which is a blind that the best men very commonly practise. He professed to be hopeless and sarcastic, and took pains all the while to set up a university (the London).

When I first saw this eminent person, he gave me the idea of a French Virgil. Not that he was like a Frenchman, much less the French translator of Virgil. I found him as handsome, as the Abbé Delille is said to have been ugly. But he seemed to me to embody a Frenchman's ideal notion of the Latin poet; something a little more cut and dry

than I had looked for; compact and elegant, critical and acute, with a consciousness of authorship upon him; a taste over-anxious not to commit itself, and refining and diminishing nature as in a drawing-room mirror. This fancy was strengthened in the course of conversation, by his expatiating on the greatness of Racine. I think he had a volume of the French poet in his hand. His skull was sharply cut and fine; with plenty, according to the phrenologists, both of the reflective and amative organs: and his poetry will bear them out. For a lettered solitude, and a bridal properly got up, both according to law and luxury, commend us to the lovely *Gertrude of Wyoming*. His face and person were rather on a small scale; his features regular; his eye lively and penetrating; and when he spoke, dimples played about his mouth; which, nevertheless, had something restrained and close in it. Some gentle puritan seemed to have crossed the breed, and to have left a stamp on his face, such as we often see in the female Scotch face rather than the male. But he appeared not at all grateful for this; and when his critiques and his Virgilianism were over, very unlike a puritan he talked! He seemed to spite his restrictions; and, out of the natural largeness of his sympathy with things high and low, to break at once out of Delille's Virgil into Cotton's, like a boy let loose from school. When I had the pleasure of hearing him afterwards,

I forgot his Virgilianisms, and thought only of the delightful companion, the unaffected philanthropist, and the creator of a beauty worth all the heroines in Racine.

Campbell tasted pretty sharply of the good and ill of the present state of society, and, for a bookman, had beheld strange sights. He witnessed a battle in Germany from the top of a convent (on which battle he has left us a noble ode); and he saw the French cavalry enter a town, wiping their bloody swords on the horses' manes. He was in Germany a second time,—I believe to purchase books; for in addition to his classical scholarship, and his other languages, he was a reader of German. The readers there, among whom he is popular, both for his poetry and his love of freedom, crowded about him with affectionate zeal; and they gave him, what he did not dislike, a good dinner. Like many of the great men in Germany, Schiller, Wieland, and others, he did not scruple to become editor of a magazine; and his name alone gave it a recommendation of the greatest value, and such as made it a grace to write under him.

I remember, one day at Sydenham, Mr. Theodore Hook coming in unexpectedly to dinner, and amusing us very much with his talent at extempore verse. He was then a youth, tall, dark, and of a good person, with small eyes, and features more round

than weak; a face that had character and humour, but no refinement. His extempore verses were really surprising. It is easy enough to extemporize in Italian — one only wonders how, in a language in which everything conspires to render verse-making easy, and it is difficult to avoid rhyming, this talent should be so much cried up—but in English it is another matter. I have known but one other person besides Hook, who could extemporize in English; and he wanted the confidence to do it in public. Of course, I speak of rhyming. Extempore blank verse, with a little practice, would be found as easy in English as rhyming is in Italian. In Hook the faculty was very unequivocal. He could not have been aware of all the visitors, still less of the subject of conversation when he came in, and he talked his full share till called upon; yet he ran his jokes and his verses upon us all in the easiest manner, saying something characteristic of every body, or avoiding it with a pun; and he introduced so agreeably a piece of village scandal upon which the party had been rallying Campbell, that the poet, though not unjealous of his dignity, was, perhaps, the most pleased of us all. Theodore afterwards sat down to the pianoforte, and enlarging upon this subject, made an extempore parody of a modern opera, introducing sailors and their clap-traps, rustics, &c. and making the poet and his supposed

flame, the hero and heroine. He parodied music as well as words, giving us the most received cadences and flourishes, and calling to mind (not without some hazard to his filial duties) the commonplaces of the pastoral songs and duets of the last half century; so that if Mr. Dignum, the Damon of Vauxhall, had been present, he would have doubted whether to take it as an affront or a compliment. Campbell certainly took the theme of the parody as a compliment; for having drank a little more wine than usual that evening, and happening to wear a wig on account of having lost his hair by a fever, he suddenly took off the wig, and dashed it at the head of the performer, exclaiming, "You dog! I'll throw my laurels at you."

I have since been unable to help wishing, perhaps not very wisely, that Campbell would have been a little less careful and fastidious in what he did for the public; for, after all, an author may reasonably be supposed to do best that which he is most inclined to do. It is our business to be grateful for what a poet sets before us, rather than to be wishing that his peaches were nectarines, or his Falernian champagne. Campbell, as an author, was all for refinement and classicality, not, however, without a great deal of pathos and luxurious fancy. His merry *jongleur*, Theodore Hook, had as little propensity, perhaps, as can be imagined, to any of those niceties: yet

in the pleasure of recollecting the evening which I passed with him, I was unable to repress a wish, as little wise as the other; to-wit, that he had stuck to his humours and farces, for which he had real talent, instead of writing politics. There was ability in the novels which he subsequently wrote; but their worship of high life, and attacks on vulgarity, were themselves of the vulgarest description.

Mathews, the comedian, I had the pleasure of seeing at Mr. Hill's several times, and of witnessing his imitations, which, admirable as they were on the stage, were still more so in private. His wife occasionally came with him, with her handsome eyes, and charitably made tea for us. Many years afterwards I had the pleasure of seeing them at their own table; and I thought that while Time, with unusual courtesy, had spared the sweet countenance of the lady, he had given more force and interest to that of the husband in the very ploughing of it up. Strong lines had been cut, and the face stood them well. I had seldom been more surprised than on coming close to Mathews on that occasion, and seeing the bust which he possessed in his gallery of his friend Liston. Some of these comic actors, like comic writers, are as unfarcical as can be imagined in their interior. The taste for humour comes to them by the force of contrast. The last time I had seen Mathews, his face appeared to me insignificant to what it was

then. On the former occasion, he looked like an irritable in-door pet: on the latter, he seemed to have been grappling with the world, and to have got vigour by it. His face had looked out upon the Atlantic, and said to the old waves, "Buffet on; I have seen trouble as well as you." The paralytic affection, or whatever it was, that twisted his mouth when young, had formerly appeared to be master of his face, and given it a character of indecision and alarm. It now seemed a minor thing; a twist in a piece of old oak. And what a bust was Liston's! The mouth and chin, with the throat under it, hung like an old bag; but the upper part of the head was as fine as possible. There was a speculation, a look-out, and even an elevation of character in it, as unlike the Liston on the stage, as Lear is to King Pippin. One might imagine Laberius to have had such a face.

The reasons why Mathews's imitations were still better in private than in public were, that he was more at his ease personally, more secure of his audience ("fit though few"), and able to interest them with traits of private character, which could not have been introduced on the stage. He gave, for instance, to persons who he thought could take it rightly, a picture of the manners and conversation of Sir Walter Scott, highly creditable to that celebrated person, and calculated to add regard to

admiration. His commonest imitations were not superficial. Something of the mind and character of the individual was always insinuated, often with a dramatic dressing, and plenty of sauce piquante. At Sydenham he used to give us a dialogue among the actors, each of whom found fault with another for some defect or excess of his own.—Kemble objecting to stiffness, Munden to grimace, and so on. His representation of Incledon was extraordinary: his nose seemed actually to become aquiline. It is a pity I cannot put upon paper, as represented by Mr. Mathews, the singular gabblings of that actor, the lax and sailor-like twist of mind, with which everything hung upon him; and his profane pieties in quoting the Bible; for which, and swearing, he seemed to have an equal reverence. He appeared to be charitable to everybody but Braham. He would be described as saying to his friend Holman, for instance, "My dear George, don't be abusive, George;—don't insult,—don't be indecent, by G—d! You should take the beam out of your own eye,—what the devil is it?, you know, in the Bible; something" (the *a* very broad) "about *a* beam, my dear George! and—and—and *a* mote;—you 'll find it in *any* part of the Bible; yes, George, my dear boy, the Bible, by G—d;" (and then with real fervour and reverence) "the Holy Scripture, G—d d—me!" He swore as dreadfully

as a devout knight-errant. Braham, whose trumpet blew down his wooden walls, he could not endure. He is represented as saying one day, with a strange mixture of imagination and matter-of-fact, that "he only wished his beloved master, Mr. Jackson, could come down from heaven, and take the Exeter stage to London, to hear that d—d Jew!"

As Hook made extempore verses on us, so Mathews one day gave an extempore imitation of us all round, with the exception of a young theatrical critic (*videlicet*, myself), in whose appearance and manner he pronounced that there was no handle for mimicry. This, in all probability, was intended as a politeness towards a comparative stranger, but it might have been policy; and the laughter was not missed by it. At all events, the critic was both good-humoured enough, and at that time self-satisfied enough, to have borne the mimicry; and no harm would have come of it.

One morning, after stopping all night at this pleasant house, I was getting up to breakfast, when I heard the noise of a little boy having his face washed. Our host was a merry bachelor, and to the rosiness of a priest might, for aught I knew, have added the paternity; but I had never heard of it, and still less expected to find a child in his house. More obvious and obstreperous proofs, however, of the existence of a boy with a dirty face, could not

have been met with. You heard the child crying and objecting; then the woman remonstrating; then the cries of the child snubbed and swallowed up in the hard towel; and at intervals out came his voice bubbling and deploring, and was again swallowed up. At breakfast, the child being pitied, I ventured to speak about it, and was laughing and sympathizing in perfect good faith, when Mathews came in, and I found that the little urchin was he.

The same morning he gave us his immortal imitation of old Tate Wilkinson, patentee of the York Theatre. Tate had been a little too merry in his youth, and was very melancholy in old age. He had a wandering mind and a decrepit body; and being manager of a theatre, a husband, and a ratcatcher, he would speak, in his wanderings, "variety of wretchedness." He would interweave, for instance, all at once, the subjects of a new engagement at his theatre, the rats, a veal-pie, Garrick and Mrs. Siddons, and Mrs. Tate and the doctor. I do not pretend to give a specimen: Mathews alone could have done it; but one trait I recollect, descriptive of Tate himself, which will give a good notion of him. On coming into the room, Mathews assumed the old manager's appearance, and proceeded towards the window, to reconnoitre the state of the weather, which was a matter of great importance to him. His hat was like a hat worn the wrong

way, side foremost, looking sadly crinkled and old; his mouth was desponding, his eye staring, and his whole aspect meagre, querulous, and prepared for objection. This miserable object, grunting and hobbling, and helping himself with everything he can lay hold of as he goes, creeps up to the window; and, giving a glance at the clouds, turns round with an ineffable look of despair and acquiescence, ejaculating "*Uh* Christ!"

Of James Smith, a fair, stout, fresh-coloured man with round features, I recollect little, except that he used to read to us trim verses, with rhymes as pat as butter. The best of his verses are in the *Rejected Addresses;* and they are excellent. Isaac Hawkins Browne with his *Pipe of Tobacco,* and all the rhyming *jeux-d'esprit* in all the Tracts, are extinguished in the comparison; not excepting the *Probationary Odes.* Mr. Fitzgerald found himself bankrupt in *non sequiturs;* Crabbe could hardly have known which was which, himself or his parodist; and Lord Byron confessed to me, that the summing up of his philosophy, to-wit, that

"Nought is everything, and everything is nought,"

was very posing. Mr. Smith would sometimes repeat after dinner, with his brother Horace, an imaginary dialogue, stuffed full of incongruities, that made us roll with laughter. His ordinary verse and

prose were too full of the ridicule of city pretensions. To be superior to anything, it should not always be running in one's head.

His brother Horace was delicious. Lord Byron used to say, that this epithet should be applied only to eatables; and that he wondered a friend of his (I forget who) that was critical in matters of eating, should use it in any other sense. I know not what the present usage may be in the circles, but classical authority is against his lordship, from Cicero downwards; and I am content with the modern warrant of another noble wit, the famous Lord Peterborough, who, in his fine, open way, said of Fenelon, that he was such a "delicious creature he was forced to get away from him, else I would have made him pious!" I grant there something in the word delicious which may be said to comprise a reference to every species of pleasant taste. It is at once a quintessence and a compound; and a friend, to deserve the epithet, ought, perhaps, to be capable of delighting us as much over our wine, as on graver occasions. Fenelon himself could do this, with all his piety; or rather he could do it because his piety was of the true sort, and relished of everything that was sweet and affectionate. A finer nature than Horace Smith's, except in the single instance of Shelley, I never met with in man; nor even in that instance, all circumstances con-

sidered, have I a right to say that those who knew him as intimately as I did the other, would not have had the same reasons to love him. Shelley himself had the highest regard for Horace Smith, as may be seen by the following verses, the initials in which the reader has here the pleasure of filling up:—

> "Wit and sense,
> Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
> Make this dull world a business of delight,
> Are all combined in H. S."

Horace Smith differed with Shelley on some points; but on others, which all the world agree to praise highly and to practise very little, he agreed so entirely, and showed unequivocally that he did agree, that with the exception of one person (Vincent Novello), too diffident to gain such an honour from his friends, they were the only two men I had then met with, from whom I could have received and did receive advice or remonstrance with perfect comfort, because I could be sure of the unmixed motives and entire absence of self-reflection, with which it would come from them.* Shelley said to me once, "I know not what Horace

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* Notwithstanding his caprices of temper, I must add Hazlitt, who was quite capable, when he chose, of giving genuine advice, and making you sensible of his disinterestedness. Lamb could have done it, too; but for interference of any sort he had an abhorrence.

Smith must take me for sometimes: I am afraid he must think me a strange fellow: but is it not odd, that the only truly generous person I ever knew, who had money to be generous with, should be a stockbroker! And he writes poetry too," continued Shelley, his voice rising in a fervour of astonishment; "he writes poetry and pastoral dramas, and yet knows how to make money, and does make it, and is still generous!" Shelley had reason to like him. Horace Smith was one of the few men, who, through a cloud of detraction, and through all that difference of conduct from the rest of the world, which naturally excites obloquy, discerned the greatness of my friend's character. Indeed, he became a witness to a very unequivocal proof of it, which I shall mention by-and-by. The mutual esteem was accordingly very great, and arose from circumstances most honourable to both parties. "I believe," said Shelley on another occasion, "that I have only to say to Horace Smith that I want a hundred pounds or two, and he would send it me without any eye to its being returned; such faith has he that I have something within me beyond what the world supposes, and that I could only ask his money for a good purpose." And Shelley would have sent for it accordingly, if the person for whom it was intended had not said Nay. I will now mention the circumstance which first gave my friend a

regard for Horace Smith. It concerns the person just mentioned, who is a man of letters. It came to Mr. Smith's knowledge, many years ago, that this person was suffering under a pecuniary trouble. He knew little of him at the time, but had met him occasionally; and he availed himself of this circumstance to write him a letter as full of delicacy and cordiality as it could hold, making it a matter of grace to accept a bank-note of 100*l.* which he enclosed. I speak on the best authority, that of the obliged person himself; who adds that he not only did accept the money, but felt as light and happy under the obligation, as he has felt miserable under the very report of being obliged to some; and he says, that nothing could induce him to withhold his name, but a reason, which the generous, during his life-time, would think becoming.

I have said that Horace Smith was a stockbroker. He left business with a fortune, and went to live in France, where, if he did not increase, he did not seriously diminish it; and France added to the pleasant stock of his knowledge.

On returning to England, he set about exerting himself in a manner equally creditable to his talents and interesting to the public. I would not insult either the modesty or the understanding of my friend while he was alive, by comparing him with the author of *Old Mortality* and *Guy Mannering:* but I ven-

tured to say, and I repeat, that the earliest of his novels, *Brambletye House*, ran a hard race with the novel of *Woodstock*, and that it contained more than one character not unworthy of the best volumes of Sir Walter. I allude to the ghastly troubles of the Regicide in his lone house; the outward phlegm and merry inward malice of Winky Boss (a happy name), who gravely smoked a pipe with his mouth, and laughed with his eyes; and, above all, to the character of the princely Dutch merchant, who would cry out that he should be ruined, at seeing a few nutmegs dropped from a bag, and then go and give a thousand ducats for an antique. This is hitting the high mercantile character to a nicety,—minute and careful in its means, princely in its ends. If the ultimate effect of commerce (*permulti transibunt*, &c.) were not something very different from what its pursuers imagine, the character would be a dangerous one to society at large, because it throws a gloss over the spirit of money-getting; but, meanwhile, nobody could paint it better, or has a greater right to recommend it, than he who has been the first to make it a handsome portrait.

The personal appearance of Horace Smith, like that of most of the individuals I have met with, was highly indicative of his character. His figure was good and manly, inclining to the robust; and his countenance extremely frank and cordial; sweet

without weakness. I have been told he was irascible. If so, it must have been no common offence that could have irritated him. He had not a jot of it in his appearance.

Another set of acquaintances which I made at this time used to assemble at the hospitable table of Mr. Hunter the bookseller, in St. Paul's Churchyard. They were the survivors of the literary party that were accustomed to dine with his predecessor, Mr. Johnson. They came, as of old, on the Friday. The most regular were Fuseli and Bonnycastle. Now and then, Godwin was present: oftener Mr. Kinnaird the magistrate, a great lover of Horace.

Fuseli was a small man, with energetic features, and a white head of hair. Our host's daughter, then a little girl, used to call him the white-headed lion. He combed his hair up from the forehead; and as his whiskers were large, his face was set in a kind of hairy frame, which, in addition to the fierceness of his look, really gave him an aspect of that sort. Otherwise, his features were rather sharp than round. He would have looked much like an old military officer, if his face, besides its real energy, had not affected more. There was the same defect in it as in his pictures. Conscious of not having all the strength he wished, he endeavoured to make out for it by violence and pretension. He carried this so far, as to look fiercer than usual when he sat for his

picture. His friend and engraver, Mr. Houghton, drew an admirable likeness of him in this state of dignified extravagance. He is sitting back in his chair, leaning on his hand, but looking ready to pounce withal. His notion of repose was like that of Pistol:

"Now, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap."

Agreeably to this over-wrought manner, he was reckoned, I believe, not quite so bold as he might have been. He painted horrible pictures, as children tell horrible stories; and was frightened at his own lay-figures. Yet he would hardly have talked as he did about his terrors, had he been as timid as some supposed him. With the affected, impression is the main thing, let it be produced how it may. A student of the Academy told me, that Mr. Fuseli coming in one night, when a solitary candle had been put on the floor in a corner of the room, to produce some effect or other, he said it looked "like a damned soul." This was by way of being Dantesque, as Michael Angelo was. Fuseli was an ingenious caricaturist of that master, making great bodily displays of mental energy, and being ostentatious with his limbs and muscles, in proportion as he could not draw them. A leg or an arm was to be thrust down one's throat, because he knew we should dispute the truth of it. In the indulgence of this wilfulness of pur-

pose, generated partly by impatience of study, partly by want of sufficient genius, and no doubt, also, by a sense of superiority to artists who could do nothing but draw correctly, he cared for no time, place, or circumstance, in his pictures. A set of prints, after his designs, for Shakspeare and Cowper, exhibit a chaos of mingled genius and absurdity, such as, perhaps, was never before seen. He endeavoured to bring Michael Angelo's apostles and prophets, with their superhuman ponderousness of intention, into the common-places of modern life. A student reading in a garden, is all over intensity of muscle; and the quiet tea-table scene in Cowper, he has turned into a preposterous conspiracy of huge men and women, all bent on showing their thews and postures, with dresses as fantastical as their minds. One gentleman, of the existence of whose trousers you are not aware till you see the terminating line at the ankle, is sitting and looking grim on a sofa, with his hat on and no waistcoat. Yet there is real genius in his designs for Milton, though disturbed, as usual, by strainings after the energetic. His most extraordinary mistake, after all, is said to have been on the subject of his colouring. It was a sort of livid green, like brass diseased. Yet they say, that when praised for one of his pictures, he would modestly observe, "It is a pretty colour." This might have been thought a jest on his part, if remarkable stories

were not told of the mistakes made by other people with regard to colour. Sight seems the least agreed upon, of all the senses.

Fuseli was lively and interesting in conversation, but not without his usual faults of violence and pretension. Nor was he always as decorous as an old man ought to be; especially one whose turn of mind is not of the lighter and more pleasurable cast. The licences he took were coarse, and had not sufficient regard to his company. Certainly they went a great deal beyond his friend Armstrong; to whose account, I believe, Fuseli's passion for swearing was laid. The poet condescended to be a great swearer, and Fuseli thought it energetic to swear like him. His friendship with Bonnycastle had something child-like and agreeable in it. They came and went away together, for years, like a couple of old schoolboys. They, also, like boys, rallied one another, and sometimes made a singular display of it,—Fuseli, at least; for it was he that was the aggressor. I remember, one day, Bonnycastle told a story of a Frenchman, whom he had received at his house at Woolwich, and who invited him, in return, to visit him in Paris, if ever he should cross the water. "The Frenchman told me," said he, "that he had a *superb local*. When I went to Paris I called on him, and found he had a good prospect out of his window; but his *superb local* was at a hair-dresser's, up two pair of stairs."

"Vell, vell!" said Fuseli, impatiently (for, though he spoke and wrote English remarkably well, he never got rid of his Swiss pronunciation),—"Vell—vay not? vay not? Vat is to hinder his local being superb for all *thtat?*"

"I don't see," returned Bonnycastle, "how a barber's house in an alley can be a superb local."

"You doan't! Vell—but thtat is not the barber's fault—It is yours."

"How do you make that out? I'm not an alley."

"No; but you're coarsedly eegnorant."

"I may be as ignorant as you are polite; but you don't prove anything."

"Thte thtevil I doant! Did you not say he had a faine prospect out of window?"

"Yes, he had a prospect fine enough!"

"Vell, thtat constituted his superb local. A superb local is not a barber's shop, by Goade! but a faine situation. But thtat is your coarsed eegnorance of thte language."

Another time, on Bonnycastle's saying that there were no longer any *auto-da-fés,* Fuseli said he did not know that. "At all events," said he, if *you* were to go into Spain, they would have an *auto-da-fé* immediately, oan thte strength of your appearance."

Bonnycastle was a good fellow. He was a tall, gaunt, long-headed man with large features and spectacles, and a deep internal voice, with a twang

of rusticity in it; and he goggled over his plate, like a horse. I often thought that a bag of corn would have hung well on him. His laugh was equine, and showed his teeth upwards at the sides. Wordsworth, who notices similar mysterious manifestations on the part of donkeys, would have thought it ominous. Bonnycastle was passionately fond of quoting Shakspeare, and telling stories; and if the *Edinburgh Review* had just come out, would give us all the jokes in it. He had once an hypochondriacal disorder of long duration; and he told us, that he should never forget the comfortable sensation given him one night during this disorder, by his knocking a landlord, that was insolent to him, down the man's staircase. On the strength of this piece of energy (having first ascertained that the offender was not killed) he went to bed, and had a sleep of unusual soundness. Perhaps Bonnycastle thought more highly of his talents than the amount of them strictly warranted; a mistake to which scientific men appear to be more liable than others, the universe they work in being so large, and their universality (in Bacon's sense of the word) being often so small. But the delusion was not only pardonable, but desirable, in a man so zealous in the performance of his duties, and so much of a human being to all about him, as Bonnycastle was. It was delightful one day to hear him speak with compla-

cency of a translation which had appeared of one of his books in Arabic, and which began by saying, on the part of the translator, that "it had pleased God, for the advancement of human knowledge, to raise us up a Bonnycastle." Some of his stories were a little romantic, and no less authentic. He had an anecdote of a Scotchman, who boasted of being descended from the Admirable Crichton; in proof of which, the Scotchman said he had "a grit quantity of table-leenen in his possassion, marked A. C., Admirable Creechton."

Kinnaird, the magistrate, was a stout sanguine man, under the middle height, with a fine lamping black eye, lively to the last, and a person that "had increased, was increasing, and ought to have been diminished;" which is by no means what he thought of the prerogative. Next to his bottle he was fond of his Horace; and, in the intervals of business at the police-office, would enjoy both in his arm-chair. Between the vulgar calls of this kind of magistracy, and the perusal of the urbane Horace, there must have been a gusto of contradiction, which the bottle, perhaps, was required to render quite palateable. Fielding did not love his bottle the less for being obliged to lecture the drunken. Nor did his son, who succeeded him in taste and office. I know not how a former poet-laureat, Mr. Pye, managed;—another man of letters, who was fain to accept a situation

of this kind. Having been a man of fortune and a member of Parliament, and loving his Horace to boot, he could hardly have done without his wine. I saw him once in a state of scornful indignation at being interrupted in the perusal of a manuscript by the monitions of his police-officers, who were obliged to remind him over and over again that he was a magistrate, and that the criminal multitude were in waiting. Every time the door opened, he threatened and he implored.

> "Otium divos rogat in patenti
> Prensus."

Had you quoted this to Mr. Kinnaird, his eyes would have sparkled with good-fellowship: he would have finished the verse and the bottle with you, and proceeded to as many more as your head could stand. Poor fellow! the last time I saw him, he was an apparition formidably substantial. The door of our host's dining-room opened without my hearing it, and, happening to turn round, I saw a figure in a great coat, literally almost as broad as it was long, and scarcely able to articulate. He was dying of a dropsy, and was obliged to revive himself, before he was fit to converse, by the wine that was killing him. But he had cares besides, and cares of no ordinary description; and, for my part, I will not blame even his wine for killing him, unless his cares

could have done it more agreeably. After dinner that day, he was comparatively himself again, quoted his Horace as usual, talked of lords and courts with a relish, and begged that *God save the King* might be played to him on the pianoforte; to which he listened, as if his soul had taken its hat off. I believe he would have liked to die to *God save the King*, and to have "waked and found those visions true."

CHAPTER XI.

POLITICAL CHARACTERS.

Ministry of the Pittites.—Time-serving conduct of the Allies.—Height and downfall of Napoleon.—Character of George the Third.—Mistakes and sincerity of the Examiner.—*Indictment against it respecting the case of Major Hogan.—Affair of Mrs. Clarke.—Indictment respecting the reign of George the Third.—Perry, proprietor of the* Morning Chronicle.—*Characters of Lord Canning, Liverpool, and Lord Castlereagh.—Whigs and Whig-Radicals.—Queen Victoria.—Royalty and Republics.—Indictment respecting military flogging.—The Attorney General, Sir Vicary Gibbs.*

THE *Examiner* had been set up towards the close of the reign of George the Third, three years before the appointment of the regency. Pitt and Fox had died two years before; the one, in middle life, of constant ill-success, preying on a sincere but proud, and not very large mind, and unwisely supported by a habit of drinking; the other, of older but more genial habits of a like sort, and of demands beyond his strength by a sudden accession to office. The king—a conscientious but narrow-minded man, ob-

stinate to a degree of disease (which had lost him America), and not always dealing ingenuously, even with his advisers—had lately got rid of Mr. Fox's successors, on account of their urging the Catholic claims. He had summoned to office in their stead Lords Castlereagh, Liverpool, and others, who had been the clerks of Mr. Pitt; and Bonaparte was at the height of his power as French Emperor, setting his brothers on thrones, and compelling our Russian and German allies to side with him under the most mortifying circumstances of tergiversation.

It is a melancholy period for the potentates of the earth, when they fancy themselves obliged to resort to the shabbiest measures of the feeble; siding against a friend with his enemy; joining in accusations against him at the latter's dictation; believed by nobody on either side; returning to the friend, and retreating from him, according to the fortunes of war; secretly hoping, that the friend will excuse them by reason of the pauper's plea, necessity; and at no time able to give better apologies for their conduct than those "mysterious ordinations of Providence," which are the last refuge of the destitute in morals, and a reference to which they contemptuously deny to the thief and the "king's evidence." It proves to them, "with a vengeance," the "something rotten in the state of Denmark;" and will continue to prove it, and to be despicable, whether

in bad or good fortune, till the world find out a cure for the rottenness.

Yet this is what the allies of England were in the habit of doing, through the whole contest of England with France. When England succeeded in getting up a coalition against Napoleon, they denounced him for his ambition, and set out to fight him. When the coalition was broken by his armies, they turned round at his bidding, denounced England, and joined him in fighting against their ally. And this was the round of their history: a coalition and a tergiversation alternately; now a speech and a fight against Bonaparte, who beat them; then a speech and a fight against England, who bought them off; then, again, a speech and a fight against Bonaparte, who beat them again; and then, as before, a speech and a fight against England, who again bought them off. Meanwhile, they took everything they could get, whether from enemy or friend, seizing with no less greediness whatever bits of territory Bonaparte threw to them for their meanness, than pocketing the millions of Pitt, for which we are paying to this day.

It becomes us to bow, and to bow humbly, to the "mysterious dispensations of Providence;" but in furtherance of those very dispensations, it has pleased Providence so to constitute us, as to render us incapable of admiring such conduct, whether in

king's evidences or in kings; and some of the meanest figures that present themselves to the imagination in looking back on the events of those times, are the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the King of Prussia. It is salutary to bear this in mind, for the sake of royalty itself. What has since ruined Louis Philippe, in spite of all his ability, is his confounding royal privileges with base ones, and his not keeping his word as a gentleman.

If it be still asked, what are kings to do under such circumstances as those in which they were placed with Bonaparte? what is their alternative? it is to be replied, firstly, that the question has been answered already, by the mode in which the charge is put; and, secondly, that whatever they do, they must either cease to act basely, and like the meanest of mankind, or be content to be regarded as such, and to leave such stains on their order as tend to produce its downfall, and to exasperate the world into the creation of republics. Republics, in the first instance, are never desired for their own sakes. I do not think they will be finally desired at all; certainly not unaccompanied by courtly graces and good breeding, and whatever can tend to secure to them ornament as well as utility. I do not think it is in human nature to be content with a different settlement of the old question, any more than it is in nature physical to dispense with her pomp of flowers

and colours. But sure I am, that the first cravings for republics always originate in some despair created by the conduct of kings.

It might be amusing to bring together a few of the exordiums of those same speeches, or state papers, of the allies of George the Third; but I have not time to look for them; and perhaps they would prove tiresome. It is more interesting to consider the "state" which Bonaparte kept in those days, and to compare it with his exile in St. Helena. There are more persons, perhaps, in the present generation who think of Bonaparte as the captive of Great Britain, defeated by Wellington, than as the maker of kings and queens, reigning in Paris, and bringing monarchs about his footstool. The following is the figure he used to make in the French newspapers at the time when the *Examiner* was set up.

NAPOLEON AND RUSSIA.

"*Tilsit, June* 25, 1807.

"This day at one o'clock, the Emperor, accompanied by the Grand Duke of Beog, the Prince of Neufchâtel, Marshal Beineres, the Grand Marshal of the Palace Duroc, and the Grand Equery Caulaincourt, embarked on the banks of the Niemen, in a boat prepared for the purpose. They proceeded to the middle of the river, where General Lariboissiere, commanding the artillery of the guard, had caused a raft to be placed, and a pavilion erected upon it. Close by it was another raft and pavilion for their majesty's suite. At the same moment the

Emperor Alexander set out from the right bank, accompanied by the Grand Duke Constantine, General Beningsen, General Ouvaroff, Prince Labanoff, and his principal aide-de-camp, Count Lieven. The two boats arrived at the same instant, and the two emperors embraced each other as soon as they set foot on the raft. They entered together the saloon which was prepared for them, and remained there during two hours. The conference having been concluded, the persons composing the suite of the two emperors were introduced. The Emperor Alexander paid the handsomest compliments to the officers who accompanied the Emperor, who, on his part, had a long conversation with the Grand Duke Constantine and General Beningsen."

[Note.—That the compliments to officers are all paid by the vanquished man, the Emperor of Russia.]

NAPOLEON AND AUSTRIA.

"*Paris, April* 4, 1810.

"The civil marriage of his majesty, the emperor and king with the Archduchess of Austria, took place at St. Cloud, on the 1st instant, and the public entry into Paris, and the religious ceremony, the next day. Previously to the public entry, the weather had been very unpropitious, but on the firing of the cannon the clouds dispersed, and a serene sky and brilliant sunshine enabled the Parisians to enjoy the pageantry, illuminations, &c. &c., which continued during the whole week. At the civil marriage ceremony, their imperial majesties having taken their seats on the throne, the princes and princesses ranged themselves in the following order:—

"To the right of the Emperor, Madame; Prince Louis Napoleon, King of Holland; Prince Jerome Napoleon, King of

Westphalia; Prince Borghese, Duke of Guastalla; Prince Joachim Napoleon, King of Naples; Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Italy; the Prince Archchancellor; the Prince Vice Grand Elector. To the left of the empress, the Princess Julia, Queen of Spain; the Princess Hortense, Queen of Holland; the Princess Catharine, Queen of Westphalia; the Princess Eliza, Grand Duchess of Tuscany; the Princess Pauline; the Princess Caroline, Queen of Naples; the Grand Duke of Wurtzburg; the Princess Augusta, Vice-Queen of Italy; the Princess Stephanie, Hereditary Grand Duchess of Baden; the Prince Arch-Treasurer; the Prince Vice-Constable, &c. &c."

Look on those pictures, and on the following:—

"*St. Helena, December* 17, 1820.

"It is a great crime here to call Bonaparte Emperor.

"He appears very unhappy. The governor will have no communication with Bertrand, and Bonaparte will not receive any except through him. This system of vexation is said to annoy him considerably; and combined with the other measures adopted towards him and his followers, tends to keep his mind in a state of continual irritation."

"*May* 15, 1821.

"Bonaparte died (on the 5th instant) after an illness of six weeks. He must have suffered great pain, though no complaint was uttered. For several days previous to his death, he had his son's bust placed at the foot of his bed, and constantly kept his eyes fixed upon it, till he breathed his last."

But the fortunes of Napoleon were on the decline, when they appeared to be at their height. The year 1808 beheld at once their culmination and their de-

scent; and it was the feeblest of his vassals who—by the very excess of his servility—gave the signal for the change. Fortunately, too, for the interests of mankind, the change was caused by a violation of the most obvious principles of justice and good sense. It was owing to the unblushing seizure of Spain. It was owing to the gross and unfeeling farce of a pretended sympathy with the Spanish king's quarrel with his son; to the acceptance of a throne which the ridiculous father had no right to give away; and to the endeavour to force the accession on a country, which, instead of tranquilly admitting it on the new principles of indifference to religion and zeal for advancement (as he had ignorantly expected), opposed it with the united vehemence of dogged bigotry and an honest patriotism.

Spain was henceforth the millstone hung round the neck of the conqueror; and his marriage with a princess of Austria, which was thought such a wonderful piece of success, only furnished him with a like impediment; for it added to the weight of his unpopularity with all honest and prospective minds. It was well said by Cobbett, that he had much better have assembled a hundred of the prettiest girls in France, and selected the prettiest of them all for his wife. The heads and hearts of the "Young Continent" were henceforward against the self-seeker, ambitious of the old "shows of things,"

in contradiction to the honest "desires of the mind." Want of sympathy was prepared for him in case of a reverse; and when, partly in the confidence of his military pride, partly by way of making a final set-off against his difficulties in Spain, and partly in very ignorance of what Russian natures and Russian winters could effect, he went and ran his head against the great northern wall of ice and snow, he came back a ruined man, masterly and surprising as his efforts to reinstate himself might thereafter be. Nothing remained for him but to fume and fret in spirit, get fatter with a vitiated state of body, and see reverse on reverse coming round him, which he was to face to no purpose. The grandest thing he did was to return from Elba: the next, to fight the battle of Waterloo; but he went to the field, bloated and half asleep, in a carriage. He had already, in body, become one of the commonest of those "emperors" whom he had first laughed at and then leagued with: no great principle stood near him, as it did in the times of the republic, when armies of shoeless youths beat the veteran troops of Austria; and thus, deserted by everything but his veterans and his generalship, which came to nothing before the unyieldingness of English, and the advent of Prussian soldiers, he became a fugitive in the "belle France" which he had fancied his own, and died a prisoner in the hands of a man of the name of Lowe.

I do not believe that George the Third, or his minister, Mr. Pitt, speculated at all upon a catastrophe like this. I mean, that I do not believe they reckoned upon Napoleon destroying himself by his own ambition. They looked, it is true, to the chance of "something turning up;" but it was to be of the ordinary kind. They thought to put him down by paid coalitions, and in the regular course of war. Hence, on repeated failures, the minister's broken heart, and probably the final extinguishment of the king's reason. The latter calamity, by a most unfortunate climax of untimeliness, took place a little before his enemy's reverses.

George the Third was a very brave and honest man. He feared nothing on earth, and he acted according to his convictions. But, unfortunately, his convictions were at the mercy of a will far greater than his understanding; and hence his courage became obstinacy, and his honesty the dupe of his inclinations. He was the son of a father with little brain, and of a mother who had a diseased blood: indeed, neither of his parents was healthy. He was brought up in rigid principles of morality on certain points, by persons who are supposed to have evaded them in their own conduct: he was taught undue notions of kingly prerogative; he was suffered to grow up, nevertheless, in homely as well as shy and moody habits; and, while acquiring a love of power tending

to the violent and uncontrollable, he was not permitted to have a taste of it, till he became his own master. The consequences of this training were an extraordinary mixture of domestic virtue with official duplicity; of rustical, mechanical tastes and popular manners, with the most exalted ideas of authority; of a childish and self-betraying cunning, with the most stubborn reserves; of fearlessness with sordidness; good-nature with unforgivingness; and of the health and strength of temperance and self-denial, with the last weaknesses of understanding, and passions that exasperated it out of its reason. The English nation were pleased to see in him a crowning specimen of themselves,—a royal John Bull. They did not discover, till too late (perhaps have not yet discovered), how much of the objectionable, as well as the respectable, lies hidden in the sturdy nickname invented for them by Arbuthnot; how much the animal predominates in it over the intellectual; and how terribly the bearer of it may be overdriven, whether in a royal or a national shape. They had much better get some new name for themselves, worthy of the days of Queen Victoria and of the hopes of the world.

In every shape I reverence calamity, and would not be thought to speak of it with levity, especially in connection with a dynasty which has since become estimable, as well as reasonable, in every respect.

If the histories of private as well as public families were known, the race of the Guelphs would only be found, in the person of one of their ancestors, to have shared, in common perhaps with every family in the world, the sorrows of occasional deterioration. But in the greatest and most tragical examples of human suffering, the homeliest, as well as the loftiest images, are too often forced on the mind together. George the Third, with all his faults, was a more estimable man than many of his enemies, and, certainly, than any of his wholesale revilers; and the memory of his last days is sanctified by whatever can render the loss of sight and of reason affecting. In one respect, when sensible of his calamity, he must have experienced a great relief. He saw that none of his children were liable to it. They had been saved by the infusion of colder and more judicious blood from another German stock. George the Fourth, though not a wise man, had as sane a constitution as any man in his dominions; and since the accession of his brother William, royalty and reason have never gone more harmoniously together, than they have done on the throne of Great Britain.

Whatever of any kind has taken place in the world, may have been best for all of us in the long run. Nature permits us, retrospectively and for comfort's sake, though not in a different spirit, to entertain that conclusion among others. But meantime, either

because the world is not yet old enough to know better, or because we yet live but in the tuning of its instruments, and have not learned to play the harmonies of the earth sweetly, men feel incited by what is good as well as bad in them, to object and to oppose; and youth being the season of inexperience and of vanity, as well as of enthusiasm otherwise the most disinterested, the *Examiner*, which began its career, like most papers, with thinking the worst of those from whom it differed, and expressing its mind accordingly with fearless sincerity (which was not equally the case with those papers), it speedily excited the anger of government. It did this the more, inasmuch as, according to what has been stated of its opinions on foreign politics, and in matters of church-government, it did not fall into the common and half-conciliating because degrading error of antagonists, by siding, as a matter of course, with the rest of its enemies.

I need not re-open the questions of foreign and domestic policy, which were mooted with the ruling powers in those days, Reform in particular. The result is well known, and the details in general have ceased to be interesting. I would repeat none of them at all, if personal history did not give a new zest to almost any kind of relation. As such, however, is the case, I shall proceed to observe, that the *Examiner* had not been established a year, when go-

vernment instituted a prosecution against it, in consequence of some remarks on a pamphlet by a Major Hogan, who accused the Duke of York, as commander-in-chief, of favouritism and corruption.

Major Hogan was a furious but honest Irishman, who had been in the army seventeen years. He had served and suffered bitterly; in the West Indies he possessed the highest testimonials to his character, had been a very active recruiting officer, had seen forty captains promoted over his head in spite of repeated applications and promises, and he desired, after all, nothing but the permission to purchase his advancement, agreeably to every custom.

Provoked out of his patience by these fruitless endeavours to buy, what others who had done nothing, obtained for nothing, and being particularly disgusted at being told, for the sixth time, that he had been "noted for promotion, and would be duly considered as favourable opportunities offered," the gallant Hibernian went straight, without any further ado, to the office of the Commander-in-chief, and there, with a vivacity and plain-speaking which must have looked like a scene in a play, addressed his Royal Highness in a speech that astounded him:

"I submitted (says he) to his Royal Highness's recollection, the long time I had been seeking for promotion, and begged him to take into his consideration the nature of the circumstances under which I was recommended to his notice; particu-

larly pressing upon his attention, that, in the course of the time I had been 'noted' on his Royal Highness's list, upwards of forty captains had been promoted without purchase, all of whom were junior to me in rank, and many of them, indeed, were not in the army when I was a captain. I added, almost literally, in these words,—'My applications for promotion have been made in the manner prescribed by the practice of the army, and by the king's regulations; unfortunately without success. Other ways, please your Royal Highness, have been recommended to me; and frequent propositions have been made by those who affected to possess the means of securing that object, that for 600*l.* I could obtain a majority without purchase, which is little more than half the sum I had lodged to purchase promotion in the regular course.* But I rejected such a proposition; for, even were such a thing possible, I would feel it unworthy of me, as a British officer and a man, to owe the king's commission to low intrigue or petticoat influence!' I expected the instantaneous expression of his Royal Highness's *gratitude* for such a candid declaration. I looked for an immediate demand for explanation, and was prepared with ample evidence to satisfy his Highness, that such proceedings were going on daily, as were disgraceful to the character of the army. But no question was put to me; his royal mind seemed astounded, *vox faucibus hæsit*, and I retired."

Having thus dumbfounded the unhappy Commander-in-chief, the Major, in his pamphlet, turned

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* "The money paid in the regular course goes into a public fund, which is not tangible by any public officer for private purposes, while the private douceur is wholly applicable to such purposes."—*The Major's Pamphlet.*

round upon certain acquaintances of his Royal Highness, and thus further proceeded to astonish the public:—

"It has been observed to me (says he), by connoisseurs, that I should have had no reason to complain, if I had proceeded in the proper way to seek promotion. But what is meant by the proper way? I applied to the Duke of York, because he was Commander-in-chief. To his Royal Highness I was directed by the King's order to apply; and with these orders alone I felt it consistent with my duty as an officer, and my honour as a gentleman, to comply. But if any other person had been the substitute of the Duke of York, I should have made my application to that person. If a Cooke, a Creswell, a Clarke, a Sinclair, or a Carey, or any other name had been invested by his Majesty with the office of Commander-in-chief, to that person I should have applied. Nay, if it had pleased his Majesty to confer upon a female the direct command of the army, I should have done my duty, in applying to the legal depository of power. But to no one other should I condescend to apply; for I scorn undue influence, and feel incapable of enjoying any object, however intrinsically valuable, that should be procured by such means.

"I have that evidence by me (he observes); indeed, I am in possession of such facts, as it would be imprudent in me to write, and as no printer in England perhaps would venture to publish. But if any member of either House of Parliament should be disposed to take up the subject, I can furnish him with materials that would enable him to make such an *exposé*, as shall stagger even the credulity proverbially ascribed to this country.

"As some proof that I am known to possess materials that

are calculated to excite alarm amongst those who must recollect their own acts, and, if they are at all sensible, must be fully conscious of their objectionable character, I have to state the following extraordinary fact:—About dusk on the evening of the first day my advertisement appeared, a lady in a dashing barouche, with two footmen, called at the newspaper-office for my address. She must be, no doubt, one of the vulnerable corps, or their agent; as, upon the following evening, at my lodgings, the waiter delivered me a letter, which I opened in the presence of four gentlemen, whose attestation to the fact appears below. The following is a copy of the letter:—

"'Sir,—The enclosed will answer for the deficit of which you complain, and which was not allowed you through mere oversight. I hope this will prevent the publication of your intended pamphlet; and, if it does, you may rely on a better situation than the one you had. When I find that you have given up all your secrets from public view, which would hurt you with all the royal family, I shall make myself known to you, and shall be happy in your future acquaintance and friendship; by which, I promise you, you will reap much benefit. If you recall the advertisement, you shall hear from me, and your claims shall be rewarded as they deserve.

"'Major Hogan.'

"'Saturday, 27th August 1808.

"'We, the undersigned, do hereby certify, that we were present when Major Hogan opened this letter and enclosure, containing four bank-notes, to the amount of four hundred pounds.

"'John Daniel, late Capt. 17th Light Drags.
Francis Moe.
Henry Wheat, Lieut. 82nd Regt.
Lewis Gasquet, late Lieut. 20th Light Drags.

"Frank's Coffee-house.

"'I do hereby certify, that this letter was delivered to me at the door by a lady, who particularly desired me to be careful to give it to Major Hogan, and instantly went away: it was dusk at the time: I returned into the coffee-room and delivered the letter.

"'GEORGE FOZED,

"'Waiter, Frank's Coffee-house.'

"But such expedients shall have no effect upon the revelations of

"D. HOGAN."

"Frank's Hotel, 3, Brook-street,
"Sept. 2, 1808.

"P. S.—The person who enclosed the four hundred pounds, not having left any address, I cannot ascertain to whom I am to return that sum; but if the numbers of the notes received are sent to No. 14, Angel-court, Throgmorton-street, the money will be returned.—D. H."

The *Examiner* made comments on these disclosures, of a nature that was to be expected from its ardour in the cause of Reform; not omitting, however, to draw a distinction between the rights of domestic privacy and the claims to indulgence set up by traffickers in public corruption. The government, however, cared nothing for this distinction; neither would it have had the corruption inquired into. Its prosecutions were of a nature that did not allow truth to be investigated; and one of these was accordingly instituted against us, when it was unexpectedly turned aside by a member of Parliament, Colonel Wardle, who was resolved to

bring the female alluded to by Major Hogan, before the notice of that tribunal.

I say "unexpectedly," because neither then, nor at any time, had I the least knowledge of Colonel Wardle. The *Examiner*, so to speak, lived quite alone. It sought nobody; and its principles in this respect had already become so well understood that few sought it, and no one succeeded in making its acquaintance. The Colonel's motion for an investigation came upon us, therefore, like a god-send. The prosecution against the paper was dropped; and the whole attention of the country was drawn to the strange spectacle of a laughing, impudent woman, brought to the bar of the House of Commons, and forcing them to laugh in their turn at the effrontery of her answers. The poor Duke of York had parted with her, and she had turned against him.

The following is a specimen of the dialogue:—

Question. Who brought that message?

Answer. A particular friend of the duke's—Mr. Taylor, a shoemaker in Bond-street—(*a laugh*).

Q. Pray, by whom did you send your desires to the duke?

A. By my own pen.

Q. I wish to know who brought the letter?

A. Why, the same Ambassador of Morocco—(*loud laughing.*) The witness was here called to order by the Speaker, and admonished to be more circumspect, or she would receive the censure of the House.

Q. What is your husband's name?

A. Clarke.

Q. Where were you married?

A. Mr. W. Adam can tell. (Adam was the duke's agent.)

Q. Did you not say you were married in Berkhampstead church?

A. No: I merely laughed at it, when I heard it.

Q. Did you ever see Mr. Alderman Clarke, or do you now believe that your husband was his nephew?

A. I don't recollect having seen Mr. Alderman Clarke; and as to my husband, I never took any pains to ascertain anything respecting him, since I quitted him. He is nothing to me, nor I to him.

Q. But what profession was he of?

A. None that I know of; but his father was a builder. (He was understood to be a mason.)

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Q. Have you not, at various times, received money from Mr. Dowler? (Dowler was Assistant-Commissary of Stores.)

A. At some particular times. I had a thousand pounds from him for his situation.

Q. Do you owe any money to Mr. Dowler?

A. I never recollect my debts to gentlemen—(*a loud burst of laughter*).

The upshot of the investigation was, that Mrs. Clarke had evidently made money by the seekers of military promotion, but that the duke was pronounced innocent of connivance. His Royal Highness withdrew however from office for a time (for he was not long afterwards reinstated), and public opinion, as to his innocence or guilt, went meanwhile pretty much according to that of party.

My own impression, at this distance of time, and

after better knowledge of the duke's private history and prevailing character, is, that there was some connivance on his part, but not of a systematic nature, or beyond what he may have considered as warrantable towards a few special friends of his mistress, on the assumption that she would carry her influence no farther. His own letters proved that he allowed her to talk to him of people with a view to promotion. He even let her recommend him a clergyman, who (as he phrased it) had an ambition to "preach before royalty." He said he would do what he could to bring it about; probably thinking nothing whatsoever—I mean, never having the thought enter his head—of the secret scandal of the thing, or not regarding his consent as anything but a piece of good-natured patronizing acquiescence, after the ordinary fashion of the "ways of the world."

For, in truth, the Duke of York was as good-natured a man as he was far from being a wise one. The investigation gave him a salutary caution; but I really believe, on the whole, that he had already been, as he was afterwards, a very good, conscientious war-office clerk. He was a brave man, though no general; a very filial, if not a very thinking politician (for he always voted to please his father); and if he had no idea of economy, it is to be recollected how easily princes' debts are incurred,

—how often encouraged by the creditors who complain of them; and how often, and how temptingly to the debtor, they are paid off by governments.

As to his amours, the temptations of royalty that way are still greater: the duke seems to have regarded a mistress in a very tender and conjugal point of view, as long as the lady chose to be equally considerate; and if people wondered why such a loving man did not love his duchess—who appears to have been as good-natured as himself—the wonder ceased when they discovered, that her Royal Highness was a lady of so whimsical a taste, and possessed such an overflowing amount of benevolence towards the respectable race of beings, hight dogs, that in the constant occupation of looking after the welfare of some scores of her canine friends, she had no leisure to cultivate the society of those human ones, that could better dispense with her attentions.

The ministers naturally grudged the *Examiner* its escape from the Hogan prosecution, especially as they gained nothing with the paper, in consequence of their involuntary forbearance. Accordingly, before another year was out, they instituted a second prosecution; and so eager were they to bring it, that, in their haste, they again overleaped their prudence. Readers in the present times, when more libels have been written in a week by Toryism itself against

royalty, in the most irreverent style, than appeared in those days in the course of a year from pens the most radical, and against princes the most provoking, are astonished to hear, that the offence we had committed consisted of the following sentence:—

"Of all monarchs since the Revolution, the successor of George the Third will have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular."

But the real offence was the contempt displayed towards the ministers themselves. The article in which the sentence appeared, was entitled "Change of Ministry;" the Duke of Portland had just retired from the premiership; and the *Examiner* had been long girding him and his associates on the score of general incompetency, as well as their particular unfitness for constitutional government. The ministers cared nothing for the king, in any sense of personal zeal, or of a particular wish to vindicate or exalt him. The tempers, caprices, and strange notions of sincerity and craft, to which he was subject, by neutralising in a great measure his ordinary good nature and somewhat exuberant style of intercourse on the side of familiarity and gossiping, did not render him a very desirable person to deal with, even among friends. But he was essentially a Tory king, and so far a favourite of Tories; he was now terminating the fiftieth year of his reign; there was

to be a jubilee in consequence; and the ministers thought to turn the loyalty of the holiday into an instrument of personal revenge.

The entire passage charged with being libellous in that article, consisted of the words marked in italics, and the framers of the indictment evidently calculated on the usual identification of a special with a Tory jury. They had reckoned, at the same time, so confidently on the effect to be produced with that class of persons, by any objection to the old king, that the proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, Mr. Perry, was prosecuted for having extracted only the two concluding sentences; and as the government was still more angered with the Whigs who hoped to displace them, than with the Radicals who wished to see them displaced, Mr. Perry's prosecution preceded ours. This was fortunate; for though the proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle* pleaded his own cause, an occasion in which a man is said to have "a fool for his client" (that is to say, in the opinion of lawyers), he pleaded it so well, and the judge (Ellenborough) who afterwards shewed himself so zealous a Whig, gave him a hearing and construction so favourable, that he obtained an acquittal, and the prosecution against the *Examiner* accordingly fell to the ground.

I had the pleasure of a visit from this gentleman while his indictment was pending. He came to tell

me how he meant to conduct his defence. He was a lively, good-natured man, with a shrewd expression of countenance, and twinkling eyes, which he not unwillingly turned upon the ladies. I had lately married, and happened to be sitting with my wife. A chair was given him close to us; but as he was very near-sighted, and yet could not well put up his eyeglass to look at her (which purpose, nevertheless, he was clearly bent on effecting), he took occasion, while speaking of the way in which he should address the jury, to thrust his face close upon hers, observing at the same time, with his liveliest emphasis, and, as if expressly for her information, "I mean to be very modest."

The unexpectedness of this announcement, together with the equivocal turn given to it by the vivacity of his movement, had all the effect of a dramatic surprise, and it was with difficulty we kept our countenance.

Mr. Perry subsequently became one of my warmest friends, and, among other services, would have done me one of a very curious nature, which I will mention by-and-by.

As the importance attached to the article by government may give it some interest, and as it is not unamusing, I will here lay the greater part of it before the reader. He will see what a very little figure is made in it by the words that were prose-

cuted, and in how much greater a degree the writer's mind must have been occupied with the king's ministers, than with the king.

Political Examiner, No. 92.—*Change of Ministry.*

"The administration is still without a head, but the ministerial papers tell us, it does quite as well as before. There can be no doubt of it. As it is not customary, however, for headless trunks to make their appearance at court, or to walk abroad under pretence of looking after the nation, it feels rather awkward without some show of pericranium; and, accordingly, like the vivacious giant in Ariosto, who dived to recover his head out of the sea, it has exhibited a singular ingenuity in endeavouring to supply its loss. At one moment, it was said to have clapped a great bottle on its shoulders, and called itself Richmond: at another, to have mounted an attorney's bag, under the name of Perceval; and at a third, to have put on an enormous balloon, and strutted forth under the appellation of Wellesley. The very idea, however, of these repairs appeared so ridiculous in the eyes of the spectators, that the project seems to have been abandoned for a time; for the trunk instantly set about repairing the additional loss of its arms, which were taken off the other day in a duel.* To this end, it is said to have applied to two great lords for assistance,† who answered, with manifest contempt, that they could not think of separating any of their members from each other to patch up so vile a body. The fragment, therefore, continues in a very desponding way at St. James's, where it keeps itself alive by

* Between Canning and Lord Castlereagh.

† Grey and Grenville.

cutting out articles for the *Morning Post* with its toes, and kicking every Catholic who comes that way, to the great diversion of the court. The other day it was introduced to his Majesty, who was pleased to express great commiseration at its want of brains, and said he would do something for it if he could.

"Such is the picture, and unfortunately no exaggerated one, of the British ministry. What the French must think of it, is too mortifying for reflection. Perhaps there never was an instance in this nation of any set of rulers, who suffered under a contempt so universal. In the general run of politics, people differ with each other on the acts of administration, as so many matters of opinion; but to admire Percival and Castlereagh is an enormity reconcileable to no standard of common sense. Wherever there is an intellect, unpolluted by interest, there the contempt of these men is pure and unmixed. They cannot even produce a decent hireling to advocate their cause; their writers have become proverbially wretched; and I believe the most galling thing that could be said to an author applying for one's opinion of his manuscript, would be to tell him that he writes like the *Post*. As to the contractors and jobbers, who all praise the ministry, there are no doubt some shrewd men in so large a body of people; but a jobber has no opinion: his object is to cheat the army and navy, and become a baronet; and he knows very well, that these things are not done by speaking the truth. A contractor, therefore, should never say, 'It is my opinion,' or, 'I really think,' as Sir William, and Sir Charles, and Sir James are apt to do, by slips of the tongue: he should say, 'My turtle informs me;' —'I understand by a large order I had the other day;'—'I am told by a very accurate bale of goods,' &c. &c. When such men can come forward and render themselves politically pro-

minent by sounding the praises of an administration, it is a sure sign that there is nobody else to do it.

"That Lords Grenville and Grey should have refused to coalesce with such a ministry, cannot be matter of surprise. Mere shame, one would think, must prevent them. Accordingly, their lordships are said to have transmitted the same prompt refusal from the country, though at the distance of six hundred miles from each other. Lord Grenville, however, having followed his letter to town, caused a 'great sensation' among the coffee-house speculators, who gave him up for lost in the irresistible vortex of place; but the papers of yesterday tell us, that his journey was in consequence of the artful ambiguity of Mr. Perceval's letter, which was so worded as to render it doubtful whether its proposals came direct from his Majesty, or only from the minister: his lordship, they say, was inclined to view it in the former light, and therefore thought himself 'bound to be near the court in its emergencies;' whereas, Lord Grey regarded it entirely as a ministerial trap, and treated it accordingly. *Whatever may be the truth of these statements, it is generally supposed that the mutilated administration, in spite of its tenacity of life, cannot exist much longer; and the Foxites, of course, are beginning to rally round their leaders, in order to give it the* coup-de-grace. *A more respectable set of men they certainly are,—with more general information, more attention to the encouragement of intellect, and altogether a more enlightened policy; and if his Majesty could be persuaded to enter into their conciliatory views with regard to Ireland, a most important and most necessary benefit would be obtained for this country. The subject of Ireland, next to the difficulty of coalition, is no doubt the great trouble in the election of his Majesty's servants; and it is this, most probably, which has given rise to the talk of a regency, a measure to which the court*

would never resort while it felt a possibility of acting upon its own principles. What a crowd of blessings rush upon one's mind, that might be bestowed upon the country in the event of such a change! Of all monarchs, indeed, since the Revolution, the successor of George the Third will have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular."

Of the ministers, whom a young journalist thus treated with contempt, I learned afterwards to think better. Not as ministers; for I still consider them, in that respect, as the luckiest, and the least deserving their luck, of any statesmen that have been employed by the House of Brunswick. I speak not only of the section at that moment reigning, but of the whole of what was called Mr. Pitt's successors. But with the inexperience and presumption of youth, I was too much in the habit of confounding difference of opinion with dishonest motives. I did not see (and it is strange how people, not otherwise wanting in common sense or modesty, can pass whole lives without seeing) that if I had a right to have good motives attributed to myself by those who differed with me in opinion, I was bound to reciprocate the concession. I did not reflect that political antagonists have generally been born and bred in a state of antagonism, and that for any one of them to demand identity of opinion from another on pain of his being thought a man of bad motives, was to demand that he should have had the antagonist's father and mother

as well as his own—the same training, the same direction of conscience, the same predilections and very prejudices; not to mention, that good motives themselves might have induced a man to go counter to all these, even had he been bred in them; which, in one or two respects, was the case with myself.

Canning, indeed, was not a man to be treated with contempt under any circumstances, by those who admired wit and rhetoric; though, compared with what he actually achieved in either, I cannot help thinking that his position procured him an undue measure of fame. What has he left us to perpetuate the amount of it? A speech or two, and the *Ode on the Knife-Grinder*. This will hardly account, with the next ages, for the statue that occupies the highway in Westminster; a compliment, too, unique of its kind; monopolizing the parliamentary pavement, as though the original had been the only man fit to go forth as the representative of Parliament itself, and to challenge the admiration of the passengers. The liberal measures of Canning's last days renewed his claim on the public regard, especially as he was left, by the jealousy and resentment of his colleagues, to carry them by himself; jealousy, because small as his wit was for a great fame, they had none of their own to equal it; and resentment, because, in its indiscretions

and inconsiderateness, it had nicknamed or bantered them all round,—the real cause, I have no doubt, of that aristocratical desertion of his ascendency, which broke his heart at the very height of his fortunes. But at the time I speak of, I took him for nothing but a great sort of impudent Eton boy, with an unfeelingness that surmounted his ability. Whereas, he was a man of great natural sensibility, a good husband and father, and an admirable son. Canning continued, as long as he lived, to write a letter every week to his mother who had been an actress, and whom he treated, in every respect, with a consideration and tenderness that may be pronounced to have been perfect. "Good son" should have been written under his statue. It would have given the somewhat pert look of his handsome face a pleasanter effect; and have done him a thousand times more good with the coming generations, than his *Ode on the Knife-Grinder*.

The Earl of Liverpool, whom Madame de Stael is said to have described as having a "talent for silence," and to have asked, in company, what had become of "that dull speaker, Lord Hawkesbury" (his title during his father's lifetime), was assuredly a very dull minister; but I believe he was a very good man. His father had been so much in the confidence of the Earl of Bute at the accession of George III., as to have succeeded to his invidious

reputation of being the secret adviser of the king; and he continued in great favour during the whole of the reign. The son, with little interval, was in office during the whole of the war with Napoleon; and after partaking of all the bitter draughts of disappointment which ended in killing Pitt, had the luck of tasting the sweets of triumph. I met him one day, not long afterwards, driving his barouche in a beautiful spot where he lived, and was so struck with the melancholy of his aspect, that, as I did not know him by sight, I asked a passenger who he was.

The same triumph did not hinder poor Lord Castlereagh from dying by his own hand. The long burden of responsibility had been too much, even for him; though, to all appearance, he was a man of a stronger temperament than Lord Liverpool, and had, indeed, a very noble aspect. He should have led a private life, and been counted one of the models of the aristocracy; for though a ridiculous speaker, and a cruel politician (out of impatience of seeing constant trouble, and not knowing otherwise how to end it), he was an intelligent and kindly man in private life, and could be superior to his position as a statesman. He delighted in the political satire of the *Beggar's Opera;* has been seen applauding it from a stage box; and Lady Morgan tells us, would ask her in company to play him the songs on the

pianoforte, and good-humouredly accompany them with a bad voice. How pleasant it is thus to find oneself reconciled to men whom we have ignorantly undervalued! and how fortunate to have lived long enough to say so!

The *Examiner*, though it preferred the Whigs to the Tories, was not a Whig of the school then existing. Its great object was a reform in Parliament, which the older and more influential Whigs did not advocate, which the younger ones (the fathers of those now living) advocated but fitfully and misgivingly, and which had lately been suffered to fall entirely into the hands of those newer and more thorough-going Whigs, which were known by the name of Radicals, and have since been called Whig-Radicals, and Liberals. The opinions of the *Examiner*, in fact, both as to State and Church Government, allowing, of course, for difference of position in the parties, and tone in their manifestation, were those now swaying the destinies of the country, in the persons of Queen Victoria, and her minister Lord John Russell. I do not presume to give her Majesty the name of a partizan; or to imply that, under any circumstances, she would condescend to accept it. Her business, as she well knows and admirably demonstrates, is, not to side with any of the disputants among her children, but to act lovingly and dispassionately for them all, as circumstances

render expedient. But the extraordinary events which took place on the continent during her childhood, the narrow political views of most of her immediate predecessors, her own finer and more genial brain, and the training of a wise mother, whose family appears to have taken healthy draughts of those ample and fresh fountains of German literature which are so well qualified to return the good done them by our own, and set the contracted stream of English thought and nurture flowing again, as becomes its common Saxon origin,—all these circumstances in combination have rendered her what no prince of her house has been before her,—equal to the demands, not only of the nation and the day, but of the days to come, and the popular interests of the world. So, at least, I conceive. I do not pretend to any special knowledge of the court or its advisers. I speak from what I have seen of her Majesty's readiness to fall in with every great and liberal measure for the education of the country, the freedom of trade, and the independence of nations; and I spoke in the same manner, before I could be suspected of confounding esteem with gratitude. She knows how, and nobly dares, to let the reins of restriction in the hands of individuals be loosened before the growing strength and self-government of the many; and the royal house that best knows how to do this, and neither to tighten those reins in anger

nor abandon them out of fear, will be the last house to suffer in any convulsion which others may provoke, and the first to be re-assured in their retention, as long as royalty shall exist. May it exist, under the shape in which I can picture it to my imagination, as long as reasonableness can outlive envy, and ornament be known to be one of nature's desires! Excess, neither of riches nor poverty, would then endanger it. I am no republican, nor ever was, though I have lived during a period of history when kings themselves tried hard to make honest men republicans by their apparent unteachableness. But my own education, the love, perhaps, of poetic ornament, and the repulsiveness of a republic itself, even of British origin, with its huffing manners, its frontless love of money, and its slave-holding abuse of its very freedom, kept me within the pale of the loyal. I might prefer, perhaps, a succession of queens to kings, and a simple fillet on their brows to the most gorgeous diadem. I think that men more willingly obey the one, and I am sure that nobody could mistake the cost of the other. But peaceful and reasonable provision for the progress of mankind towards all the good possible to their nature, is the great desideratum in government; and seeing this more securely and handsomely maintained in limited monarchies than republics, I am for English permanence in this respect, in preference to French

volatility, and American slave-holding utilitarianism.

The Tory government having failed in its two attacks on the *Examiner*, could not be content, for any length of time, till it had failed in a third. For such was the case. The new charge was again on the subject of the army,—that of military flogging. An excellent article on the absurd and cruel nature of that punishment, from the pen of the late Mr. John Scott (who afterwards fell in a duel with one of the writers in Blackwood), had appeared in a country paper, the *Stamford News*, of which he was editor. The most striking passages of this article were copied into the *Examiner;* and it is a remarkable circumstance in the history of juries, that after the journal which copied it had been acquitted in London, the journal which originated the copied matter was found guilty in Stamford; and this, too, though the counsel was the same in both instances, —the present Lord Brougham.

The attorney-general at that time was Sir Vicary Gibbs; a name, which it appears somewhat ludicrous to me to write at present, considering what a bugbear it was to politicians, and how insignificant it has since become. He was a little, irritable, sharp-featured, bilious-looking man (so at least he was described, for I never saw him); very worthy, I believe, in private; and said to be so fond of

novels, that he would read them after the labours of the day, till the wax-lights guttered without his knowing it. I had a secret regard for him on this account, and wished he would not haunt me in a spirit so unlike Tom Jones. I know not what sort of lawyer he was; probably none the worse for imbuing himself with the knowledge of Fielding and Smollett; but he was a bad reasoner, and made half-witted charges. He used those edge-tools of accusation which cut a man's own fingers. He assumed, that we could have no motives for writing but mercenary ones; and he argued, that because Mr. Scott (who had no more regard for Bonaparte than we had) endeavoured to shame down the practice of military flogging by pointing to the disuse of it in the armies of France, he only wanted to subject his native country to invasion. He also had the simplicity to ask, why we did not "speak privately on the subject to some member of Parliament," and get him to notice it in a proper manner, instead of bringing it before the public in a newspaper? We laughed at him; and the event of his accusations enabled us to laugh more.

The charge of being friends of Bonaparte against all who differed with Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning was a common, and, for too long a time, a successful trick, with such of the public as did not read the writings of the persons accused. I have

often been surprised, much later in life, both in relation to this and other charges, at the credulity into which many excellent persons had owned they had been thus beguiled, and at the surprise which they expressed in turn at finding the charges the reverse of true. To the readers of the *Examiner*, they caused only indignation or merriment.

The last and most formidable prosecution against us remains to be told; but some intermediate circumstances must be related first.

CHAPTER XII.

LITERARY WARFARE.

The Reflector *and the writers in it.*—Feast of the Poets.—*Its attack on Gifford for his attack on Mrs. Robinson.—Character of Gifford and his Writings.—Specimens of the* Baviad and Mœviad.—*His appearance at the Roxburgh Sale of Books.—Attack on Walter Scott, occasioned by a passage in his edition of Dryden.—Tory Calumny.—Quarrels and recriminations of authors.—The writer's present opinion of Sir Walter.—General offence caused by the* Feast of the Poets.—*Its inconsiderate treatment of Hayley.—Dinner of the Prince Regent.—Holland House and Lord Holland.—Neutralization of Whig advocacy.—Recollections of Blanco White.*

THE *Examiner* had been established about three years, when my brother projected a quarterly magazine of literature and politics, entitled the *Reflector*, which I edited. Lamb, Dyer, Barnes, Mitchell, the present Greek Professor Scholefield (all Christ-Hospital men), together with Dr. Aikin and his family wrote in it; and it was rising in sale every quarter, when it stopped at the close of the fourth number for want of funds. Its termination was not

owing to want of liberality in the payments. But the radical reformers in those days were not sufficiently rich or numerous to support such a publication.

Some of the liveliest effusions of Lamb first appeared in this magazine; and in order that I might retain no influential class for my good wishers, after having angered the stage, dissatisfied the Church, offended the State, not very well pleased the Whigs, and exasperated the Tories, I must needs commence the maturer part of my verse-making with contributing to its pages the *Feast of the Poets*.

The *Feast of the Poets* was (perhaps, I may say, is) a *jeu-d'esprit* suggested by the *Session of the Poets* of Sir John Suckling. Apollo gives the poets a dinner; and many verse-makers, who have no claim to the title, present themselves, and are rejected.

With this effusion, while thinking of nothing but showing my wit, and reposing under the shadow of my "laurels" (of which I expected a harvest as abundant as my self-esteem), I made almost every living poet and poetaster my enemy, and particularly exasperated those among the Tories. I speak of the shape in which it first appeared, before time and reflection had moderated its judgment. It drew upon my head all the personal hostility which had hitherto been held in a state of suspense by the vaguer daring of the *Examiner;* and I have reason to

believe that its inconsiderate, and I am bound to confess, in some respects, unwarrantable levity, was the origin of the gravest, and far less warrantable attacks which I afterwards sustained from political antagonists, and which caused the most serious mischief to my fortunes. Let the young satirist take warning; and consider how much self-love he is going to wound, by the indulgence of his own.

Not that I have to apologize to the memory of every one whom I attacked. I am sorry to have had occasion to differ with any of my fellow-creatures, knowing the mistakes to which we are all liable, and the circumstances that help to cause them. But I can only regret it, personally, in proportion to the worth or personal regret on the side of the enemy.

The *Quarterly Review*, for instance, had lately been set up, and its editor was Gifford, the author of the *Baviad and Mœviad.* I had been invited, nay, pressed by the publisher, to write in the new review; which surprised me, considering its politics and the great difference of my own. I was not aware of the little faith that was held in the politics of any beginner of the world; and I have no doubt, that the invitation had been made at the instance of Gifford himself, of whom, as the dictum of a "man of vigorous learning," and the "first satirist of his time," I had quoted in the *Critical Essays* the gentle observation, that "all

the fools in the kingdom seemed to have risen up with one accord, and exclaimed, 'let us write for the theatres!'"

Strange must have been Gifford's feelings, when, in the *Feast of the Poets*, he found his eulogizer falling as trenchantly on the author of the *Baviad and Mœviad* as the *Baviad and Mœviad* had fallen on the dramatists. The Tory editor discerned plainly enough, that if a man's politics were of no consideration with the *Quarterly Review*, provided the politician was his critical admirer, they were very different things with the editor Radical. He found also, that the new satirist had ceased to regard the old one as a "critical authority;" and he might not have unwarrantably concluded, that I had conceived some personal disgust against him as a man; for such, indeed, was the secret of my attack.

The reader is perhaps aware, that George the Fourth, when he was Prince of Wales, had a mistress of the name of Robinson. She was the wife of a man of no great character; had taken to the stage for a livelihood; was very handsome, wrote verses, and is said to have excited a tender emotion in the bosom of Charles Fox. The Prince allured her from the stage, and lived with her for some years. After their separation, and during her decline, which took place before she was old, she became afflicted with rheumatism; and as she solaced her pains, and perhaps

added to her subsistence, by writing verses, and as her verses turned upon her affections, and she could not discontinue her old vein of love and sentiment, she fell under the lash of this masculine and gallant gentleman, Mr. Gifford, who, in his *Baviad and Mœviad*, amused himself with tripping up her "crutches," particularly as he thought her on her way to her last home. This he considered the climax of the fun.

"See," exclaimed he, after a hit or two at other women, like a boy throwing stones in the street,—

> "See Robinson forget her state, and move
> *On crutches tow'rds the grave* to 'Light o' Love.'"

This is the passage which put all the gall into anything which I said, then or afterwards, of Gifford, till he attacked myself and my friends. At least, it disposed me to think the worst of whatever he wrote; and as reflection did not improve nor suffering soften him, he is the only man I ever attacked, respecting whom I have felt no regret.

It would be easy for me, at this distance of time, to own that Gifford possessed genius, had such been the case. It would have been easy for me at any time. But he had not a particle. The scourger of poetasters was himself a poetaster. When he had done with his whip, everybody had a right to take it up, and lay it over the scourger's shoulders; for

though he had sense enough to discern glaring faults, he abounded in commonplaces. His satire itself, which at its best never went beyond smartness, was full of them.

The reader shall have a specimen or two, in order that Mr. Gifford may speak for himself; for his book has long ceased to be read. He shall see with how little a stock of his own a man may set up for a judge of others.

The *Baviad and Mœviad*—so called from two bad poets mentioned by Virgil—was a satire, imitated from Persius, on a set of fantastic writers who had made their appearance under the title of Della Cruscans. The coterie originated in the meeting of some of them at Florence, the seat of the famous Della Cruscan Academy. Mr. Merry, their leader, who was a member of that academy, and who wrote under its signature, gave occasion to the name. They first published a collection of poems, called the *Florence Miscellany*, and then sent verses to the London newspapers, which occasioned an overflow of contributions in the like taste. The taste was as bad as can be imagined; full of floweriness, conceits, and affectation; and, in attempting to escape from commonplace, it evaporated into nonsense:—

> "Was it the shuttle of the morn
> That wove upon the cobwebb'd thorn
> Thy airy lay?"

"Hang o'er his eye the gossamery tear."

"Gauzy zephyrs, fluttering o'er the plain,
On twilight's bosom drop their filmy rain."
&c. &c.

It was impossible that such absurdities could have had any lasting effect on the public taste. They would have died of inanition. But Mr. Gifford, finding the triumph easy, and the temptation to show his superiority irresistible, chose to think otherwise; and hence his determination to scourge the rogues, and trample on their imbecility.

The female portion of them particularly offended him. The first name he mentions is that of Mrs. Piozzi, whose presumption in writing books he seemed to consider a personal offence,—as though he represented the whole dignity and indignation of literature. His attack on her, which he commences in a note, opens with the following unconscious satire on himself:—

"'Though no one better knows his *own* house' than I the *vanity* of this woman, yet the idea of her undertaking such a work" (*British Synonimes*) "had never entered my head, and I was *thunderstruck* when I first saw it announced."

Mrs. Piozzi was, perhaps, as incompetent to write *British Synonimes* as Mr. Gifford to write poetry; but what call had he to be offended with the mistake?

His satire consists, not in a critical exposure,—in showing why the objects of his contempt are wrong,—but in simply asserting that they are so. He turns a commonplace of his own in his verses, quotes a passage from his author in a note, expresses his amazement at it, and thus thinks he has proved his case, when he has made out nothing but an overweening assumption at the expense of what was not worth noticing. "I was born," says he,

> "To *brand* obtrusive ignorance with scorn,
> On bloated pedantry to *pour my rage*,
> And *hiss preposterous fustian* from the stage."

What commonplace talking is that? And so he goes on:—

> "Lo! Della Crusca, in his closet pent,
> *He toils to give the crude conceptions vent.*
> Abortive thoughts, that *right and wrong confound*,
> Truth *sacrificed* to letters, [why 'letters'?] *sense to sound;*
> *False glare,* incongruous images, *combine;*
> And noise and nonsense clatter through the line."

What is the example of writing here which is shown to the poor Della Cruscans? What the masterly novelty of style or imagery? What the right evinced to speak in the language of a teacher? Yet Gifford never doubted himself on these points. He stood uttering his didactic nothings as if other literary defaulters were but so many children, whom

it taxed his condescension to instruct. Here is some more of the same stuff:—

"Then let your style be brief, your meaning clear,
Nor, like Lorenzo, tire the labouring ear
With a wild waste of words; sound without sense,
And all the florid glare of impotence.
Still, with your characters your language change,—
From grave to gay, *as nature dictates*, range;
Now droop in all the plaintiveness of woe,—(!!)
Now in glad numbers light and airy flow;
Now shake the stage with guilt's alarming *tone*, (!!)
And make the aching bosom *all your own*."

Was there ever a fonder set of complacent old phrases, such as any schoolboy might utter? Yet this is the man who undertook to despise Charles Lamb, and to trample on Keats and Shelley.

I have mentioned the Roxburgh sale of books. I was standing among the bidders with my friend the late Mr. Barron Field, when he jogged my elbow, and said, "There is Gifford over the way, looking at you with *such* a face!" I met the eyes of my beholder, and saw a little man, with a warped frame and a countenance between the querulous and the angry, gazing at me with all his might. It was, truly enough, the satirist who could not bear to be satirized,—the denouncer of incompetencies, who could not bear to be told of his own. He had now learnt, as I was myself to learn, what it was to taste of his own bitter medicaments; and he never pro-

fited by it; for his *Review* spared neither age nor sex as long as he lived. What he did at first, out of a self-satisfied incompetence, he did at last out of an envious and angry one; and he was, all the while, the humble servant of power, and never expressed one word of regret for his inhumanity. This mixture of implacability and servility is the sole reason, as I have said before, why I still speak of him as I do. If he secretly felt regret for it, I am sorry,—especially if he retained any love for his "Anna," whom I take to have been not only the good servant and friend he describes her, but such a one as he could wish that he had married. Why did he not marry her, and remain a humbler and a happier man? or how was it, that the power to have any love at all could not teach him that other people might have feelings as well as himself, especially women and the sick?

Such were the causes of my disfavour with the Tory critics in England.

To those in Scotland I gave, in like manner, the first cause of offence, and they had better right to complain of me; though they ended, as far as regards the mode of resentment, in being still more in the wrong. I had taken a dislike to Walter Scott, on account of a solitary passage in his edition of *Dryden*,—nay, on account of a single word. The word, it must be allowed, was an extraordinary one,

and such as he must have regretted writing: for a more dastardly or deliberate piece of wickedness than allowing a ship with its crew to go to sea, knowing the vessel to be leaky, believing it likely to founder, and on purpose to destroy one of the passengers, it is not easy to conceive; yet, because this was done by a Tory king, the relater could find no severer term for it than "ungenerous." Here is the passage:—

"His political principles (the Earl of Mulgrave's) were those of a stanch Tory, which he maintained through his whole life; and he was zealous for the royal prerogative, although he had no small reason to complain of Charles the Second, who, to avenge himself of Mulgrave, for a supposed attachment to the Princess Anne, sent him to Tangiers, at the head of some troops, in a leaky vessel, *which it was supposed must have perished in the voyage.* Though Mulgrave was apprised of the danger, he scorned to shun it; and the Earl of Plymouth, a favourite son of the king, generously insisted upon sharing it along with him. This *ungenerous* attempt to destroy him in the very act of performing his duty, with the refusal of a regiment, made a temporary change in Mulgrave's conduct."—*Notes on Absalom and Achitophel in Dryden's Works*, vol. ix. p. 304.

This passage was the reason why the future great novelist was introduced to Apollo, in the *Feast of the Poets*, after a very irreverent fashion.

I believe, that with reference to high standards of poetry and criticism, superior to mere description,

however lively, to the demands of rhyme for its own sake, to prosaical groundworks of style, metaphors of common property, conventionalities in general, and the prevalence of a material over a spiritual treatment, my estimate of Walter Scott's then publications, making allowance for the manner of it, will still be found not far from the truth, by those who have profited by a more advanced age of æsthetical culture.

There is as much difference, for instance, poetically speaking, between Coleridge's brief poem, *Christabel*, and all the narrative poems of Walter Scott, or as Wordsworth called them, "novels in verse," as between a precious essence and a coarse imitation of it, got up for sale. Indeed, Coleridge, not unnaturally, though not with entire reason (for the story and the characters were the real charm), lamented that an endeavour, unavowed, had been made to catch his tone, and had succeeded just far enough to recommend to unbounded popularity what had nothing in common with it.

But though Walter Scott was no novelist at that time except in verse, the tone of personal assumption towards him in the *Feast of the Poets* formed a just ground of offence. Not that I had not as much right to differ with any man on any subject, as he had to differ with others; but it would have become me, especially at that time of life, and in speaking

of a living person, to express the difference with modesty. I ought to have taken care also not to fall into one of the very prejudices I was reproving, and think ill or well of people in proportion as they differed or agreed with me in politics. Walter Scott saw the good of mankind in a Tory or retrospective point of view. I saw it from a Whig, a Radical, or prospective one; and though I still think he was mistaken, and though circumstances have shown that the world think so too, I ought to have discovered, even by the writings which I condemned, that he was a man of a kindly nature; and it would have become me to have given him credit for the same good motives, which I arrogated exclusively for my own side of the question. It is true, it might be supposed, that I should have advocated that side with less ardour, had I been more temperate in this kind of judgment; but I do not think so. Or if I had, the want of ardour would probably have been compensated by the presence of qualities, the absence of which was injurious to its good effect. At all events, I am now of opinion, that whatever may be the immediate impression, a cause is advocated to the most permanent advantage by persuasive, instead of provoking manners; and certain I am, that whether this be the case or not, no human being, be he the best and wisest of his kind, much less a confident young man, can be so sure of the result of his confidence,

as to warrant the substitution of his will and pleasure in that direction, for the charity which befits his common modesty and his participation of error.

It is impossible for me, in other respects, to regret the war I had with the Tories. I rejoice in it as far as I can rejoice at anything painful to myself and others, and I am paid for the consequences in what I have lived to see; nay, in the respect and regrets of the best of my enemies. But I am sorry, that in aiming wounds which I had no right to give, I cannot deny that I brought on myself others which they had still less right to inflict; and I make the amends of this confession, not only in return for what they have expressed themselves, but in justice to the feelings which honest men of all parties experience as they advance in life, and when they look back calmly upon their common errors.

"I shall put this book in my pocket," said Walter Scott to Murray, after he had been standing a while at his counter, reading the *Story of Rimini*.

"Pray do," said the publisher. The copy of the book was set down to the author in the bookseller's account, as a present to Walter Scott. Walter Scott was beloved by his friends; the author of the *Story of Rimini* was an old offender, personal as well as political; and hence the fury with which they fell on him in their new publication.

Gifford, in his *Baviad and Mœviad*, speaking of

a daily paper called the *World*, had said, "In this paper were given the earliest specimens of those unqualified and audacious attacks on all private character, which the town first railed at for their quaintness, then tolerated for their absurdity, and now that other papers, equally wicked and more intelligible, have ventured to imitate it, will have to lament to the last hour of British liberty."

This close of Gifford's remark is one of his commonplaces,—a conventional cadence and turn of words. Calumny has been out of fashion for some time. But the example he speaks of was infectious in those days; and curiously enough, it was destined to be followed up, and carried to excess, by his own side of the question. It is to the honour of the Whigs and Radicals, that they went to no such extremities, even during the height of the warfare. The Priestleys, Aikins, and Gilbert Wakefields, were in too philosophic and suffering a minority for it; Montgomery the poet (who edited the *Sheffield Iris*), had too much religion for it; Cobbett, with all his virulence, appears never to have thought of it; Hazlitt, though his portrait-painting tempted him into minor personalities, disdained it; and all the notice (as far as I am aware) which any liberal journal took of matters of private life, the *Examiner* included, was confined to circumstances that were forced on the public attention by their connection with matters of state; as in the

instances of the Duke of York's mistress, who trafficked in commissions, and of poor foolish Queen Caroline, who was victimized by an unworthy husband.

Every party has a right side and a wrong. The right side of Whiggism, Radicalism, or the love of liberty, is the love of justice; the wish to see fair-play to all men, and the advancement of knowledge and competence. The wrong side is the wish to pull down those above us, instead of the desire of raising those who are below. The right side of Toryism is the love of order, and the disposition to reverence and personal attachment; the wrong side is the love of power for power's sake, and the determination to maintain it in the teeth of all that is reasonable and humane. A strong spice of superstition, generated by the habit of success, tended to confuse the right and wrong sides of Toryism, in minds not otherwise unjust or ungenerous. They seemed to imagine, that heaven and earth would "come together," if the supposed favourites of Providence were to be considered as favourites no longer; and hence the unbounded license which they gave to their resentment, and the strange self-permission of a man like Walter Scott, not only to lament over the progress of society, as if the future had been ordained only to carry on the past, but to countenance the border-like forages of his friends into provinces which they had no business to invade, and to speculate upon still greater

organizations of them, which circumstances, luckily for his fame, prevented. I allude to the intended establishment of a journal, which, as it never existed, it is no longer necessary to name.

Readers in these kindlier days of criticism have no conception of the extent to which personal hostility allowed itself to be transported, in the periodicals of those times. Personal habits, appearances, connections, domesticities, nothing was safe from misrepresentations, begun perhaps in the gaiety of a saturnalian license, but gradually carried to an excess which would have been ludicrous, had it not sometimes produced tragical consequences. It threatened a great many more, and scattered, meantime, a great deal of wretchedness among unoffending as well as offending persons, sometimes in proportion to the delicacy which hindered them from exculpating themselves, and which could only have vindicated one portion of a family by sacrificing another. I was so caricatured, it seems, among the rest, upon matters great and small (for I did not see a tenth part of what was said of me), that persons, on subsequently becoming acquainted with me, sometimes expressed their surprise at finding me no other than I was in face, dress, manners, and very walk; to say nothing of the conjugality which they found at my fireside, and the affection which I had the happiness of enjoying among my friends in general. I never

retaliated in the same way; first, because I had never been taught to respect it, even by the jests of Aristophanes; secondly, because I observed the sorrow it caused both to right and wrong; thirdly, because it is impossible to know the truth of any story if related of a person, without hearing all the parties concerned; and fourthly, because, while people thought me busy with politics and contention, I was almost always absorbed in my books and verses, and did not, perhaps, sufficiently consider the worldly consequences of the indulgence.

The quarrels of authors, and the scandals which they have caused one another, were, unfortunately, not new to the reading part of the public, though the tone of hostility had hardly before been exceeded, except in religious controversy, and in the disputes between some of the early writers of Italy. "The life of a wit," said Steele, "is a warfare upon earth." He himself was called by an enemy, the "vilest of mankind;" upon which he said, in the gaiety of an honest heart, that "it would be a glorious world if he was." Even Steele, so exasperating is this kind of warfare, allowed himself to be provoked into personalities. Swift abounded in it, though he lived in one of the most perilous of "glass-houses," and miraculously escaped retribution; probably from the very pity which he denied. But why multiply examples on this painful subject? Clarke and Cud-

worth have been called "atheists"; and Fenelon, who was "only a little lower than the angels," a "ferocious brute!" I do not pretend to compare myself with the least of such men; and I am willing to have paid the penalty of what was really faulty in me, in suffering for what was not: but as I do not claim to be considered better than my neighbours, or to have been so at any time, so I may be allowed to comfort myself with thinking I am no worse. I may even presume so far in copying the jovial self-reconcilement of Steele, as to believe that the world would be no very great vale of tears, if all the men in it were no worse disposed.

If Sir Walter Scott was a poet of a purely conventional order, warmed with a taste for old books, and if he was a critic more agreeable than subtle, and a bitter and not very large-minded politician, unwilling, and perhaps unable, to turn his eyes from the past to the future, and to look with patience on the prospects of the many, he was a man of singular and admirable genius in the points in which he excelled, great in some respects, and charming almost in all. I beg leave to think that he did not possess that attribute of genius, which is said to partake of the feminine as well as the masculine; if feminine only it be, to excel in sweet as well as strong, to be musical and graceful, and be able to paint women themselves; and I will not do such discredit to his

20395

memory, in this or in any masculine respect, as to repeat the comparisons of him with Shakspeare, who painted both women and men to admiration, and was a great poet, and a profound universalist, and excelled as much in nature as in manners; for certainly Scott was in all these respects (and rare is the excellence that can be put even to such a disadvantage) but a half, or even a third or fourth kind of Shakspeare, with all the poetry (so to speak) taken out of him, and all the expression and the quotability besides; Sir Walter being, perhaps, the least quotable for sententiousness or wit, or any other memorable brevity, in the whole circle of illustrious writers. But he was an agreeable and kindly biographer, a most entertaining selector from history, an exquisite antiquary, a charming companion, a warm-hearted friend, a good father, husband, and man; and though his novels, as works of art and style, were inferior to Fielding, and I think it was a want of imagination in him, and a self-abasement, to wish to build a great house and be a feudal lord, instead of being content to write about houses and lords, and living among us all to this day in a cottage that still would have been a shrine for princes to visit; yet, assuredly, he was the most wonderful combiner of the novel and romance that ever existed. He was Shakspearian in the abundance and variety of his characters, unsurpassed, if ever equalled, in the substantial flow of

his pen; and in spite of admirable Burns and delightful Thomson, and all the historical and philosophical names of Edinburgh during the last and present century, was upon the whole the greatest writer that Scotland has produced.

It can be of no consequence to the memory of such a man what I said or thought of him, whether before his death or after; but for my own sake, since I am forced to speak of such things in a work like the present, I may be allowed to state, that whatever hostility I was forced to maintain with his politics, and so far with himself, I had the pleasure of expressing my regret for the mistakes which I had made about him, long before I experienced their ill effects. I will add, that long after those effects, and when he was lying sick in London on his way to his last home, I called every morning at his door (anonymously; for I doubted whether my name would please him) to furnish a respectful bulletin of his health to a daily paper, in which I suggested its appearance; and I will not conceal, that as I loved the humanities in his wonderful pages, in spite of the politics which accompanied them, so I mourned for his closing days, and shed tears at his death.

To return to the *Feast of the Poets.* I offended all the critics of the old or French school, by objecting to the monotony of Pope's versification, and all the critics of the new or German school, by laughing

at Wordsworth, with whose writings I was then unacquainted, except through the medium of his deriders. On reading him for myself, I became such an admirer, that Lord Byron accused me of making him popular upon town. I had not very well pleased Lord Byron himself, by counting him inferior to Wordsworth. Indeed, I offended almost everybody whom I noticed; some by finding any fault at all with them; some, by not praising them on their favourite points; some, by praising others on any point; and some, I am afraid, and those among the most good-natured, by needlessly bringing them on the carpet, and turning their very good-nature into a subject for caricature. Thus I introduced Mr. Hayley, whom I need not have noticed at all, as he belonged to a by-gone generation. He had been brought up in the courtesies of the old school of manners, which he ultra-polished and rendered caressing, after the fashion of my Arcadian friends of Italy; and as the poetry of the *Triumphs of Temper* was not as vigorous in style as it was amiable in its moral and elegant in point of fancy, I chose to sink his fancy and his amiableness, and to represent him as nothing but an effeminate parader of phrases of endearment and pickthank adulation. I looked upon him as a sort of powder-puff of a man, with no real manhood in him, but fit only to suffocate people with his frivolous vanity, and be struck aside with con-

tempt. I had not yet learned, that writers may be very "strong" and huffing on paper, while feeble on other points, and, *vice versâ*, weak in their metres, while they are strong enough as regards muscle. I remember my astonishment, years afterwards, on finding that the "gentle Mr. Hayley," whom I had taken for

"A puny insect, shivering at a breeze,"

was a strong-built man, famous for walking in the snow before daylight, and possessed of an intrepidity as a horseman amounting to the reckless. It is not improbable, that the feeble Hayley, during one of his equestrian passes, could have snatched up the "vigorous" Gifford, and pitched him over the hedge into the next field.

Having thus secured the enmity of the Tory critics north and south, and the indifference (to say the least of it) of the gentlest lookers on, it fell to the lot of the better part of my impulses, to lose me the only counteracting influence which was offered me in the friendship of the Whigs. I had partaken deeply of Whig indignation at the desertion of their party by the Prince Regent. The *Reflector* contained an article on his Royal Highness, bitter accordingly, which bantered, among other absurdities, a famous dinner given by him to "one hundred and fifty particular friends." There was a real stream of water running down the table at this dinner,

stocked with gold fish. It had banks of moss and bridges of pasteboard; the salt-cellars were panniers borne by "golden asses"; everything, in short, was as unlike the dinners now given by the sovereign, in point of taste and good sense, as effeminacy is different from womanhood; and the *Reflector*, in a parody of the complaint of the shepherd, described how

> "Despairing, beside a clear stream,
> The bust of a cod-fish was laid;
> And while a false taste was his theme,
> A drainer supported his head."

A day or two after the appearance of this article, I met in the street the late estimable Blanco White, whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted with. He told me of the amusement it had given at Holland House; and added, that Lord Holland would be glad to see me among his friends there, and that he (Blanco White) was commissioned to say so.

I did not doubt for an instant, that anything but the most disinterested kindness and good-nature dictated the invitation which was thus made me. It was impossible, at any future time, that I could speak with greater respect and admiration of his lordship, than I had been in the habit of doing already. Never had an unconstitutional or illiberal measure taken place in the House of Lords, but his protest was sure to appear against it; and this, and his elegant literature and reputation for hospitality,

had completely won my heart. At the same time, I did not look upon the invitation as any return for this enthusiasm. I considered his lordship (and now at this moment consider him) as having been as free from every personal motive as myself; and this absence of all suspicion, prospective or retrospective, enabled me to feel the more confident and consoled in the answer which I felt bound to make to his courtesy.

I said to Mr. Blanco White, that I could not sufficiently express my sense of the honour that his lordship was pleased to do me; that there was not a man in England at whose table I should be prouder or happier to sit; that I was fortunate in having a conveyer of the invitation, who would know how to believe what I said, and to make a true representation of it; and that with almost any other person, I should fear to be thought guilty of immodesty and presumption, in not hastening to avail myself of so great a kindness; but that the more I admired and loved the character of Lord Holland, the less I dared to become personally acquainted with him; that being a far weaker person than he gave me credit for being, it would be difficult for me to eat the mutton and drink the claret of such a man, without falling into any opinion into which his conscience might induce him to lead me; and, that not having a single personal acquaintance, even among what was called my

own party (the Radicals), his lordship's goodness would be the more easily enabled to put its kindest and most indulgent construction on the misfortune which I was obliged to undergo, in denying myself the delight of his society.

I do not say that these were the very words, but they convey the spirit of what I said to Mr. Blanco White; and I should not have doubted his giving them a correct report, even had no evidence of it followed. But there did; for Lord Holland courteously sent me his publications, and never ceased, while he lived, to show me all the kindness in his power.

Of high life in ordinary, it is little for me to say that I might have had a surfeit of it, if I pleased. Circumstances, had I given way to them, might have rendered half my existence a round of it. I might also have partaken no mean portion of high life extraordinary. And very charming is its mixture of softness and strength, of the manliness of its taste and the urbanity of its intercourse. I have tasted, if not much of it, yet some of its very essence, and I cherish, and am grateful for it at this moment. What I have said, therefore, of Holland House, is mentioned under no feelings, either of assumption or servility. The invitation was made, and declined, with an equal spirit of faith on both sides in far better impulses.

Far, therefore, am I from supposing, that the

silence of the Whig critics respecting me was owing to any hostile influence which Lord Holland would have condescended to exercise. Not being among the visitors at Holland House, I dare say I was not thought of; or if I was thought of, I was regarded as a person who, in shunning Whig connection, and, perhaps, in persisting to advocate a reform towards which they were cooling, might be supposed indifferent to Whig advocacy. And, indeed, such was the case, till I felt the want of it.

Accordingly, the *Edinburgh Review* took no notice of the *Feast of the Poets*, though my verses praised it at the expense of the *Quarterly*, and though some of the reviewers, to my knowledge, liked it, and it echoed the opinions of others. It took no notice of the pamphlet on the *Folly and Danger of Methodism*, though the opinions in it were, perhaps, identical with its own. And it took as little of the *Reformist's Answer to an Article in the Edinburgh Review*—a pamphlet which I wrote in defence of its own reforming principles, which it had lately taken it into its head to renounce as impracticable. Reform had been apparently given up for ever by its originators; the Tories were increasing in strength every day; and I was left to battle with them as I could. Little did I suppose, that a time would come when I should be an Edinburgh Reviewer myself; when its former editor, agreeably to the dictates of his heart, would

be one of the kindest of my friends; and when a cadet of one of the greatest of the Whig houses, too young at that time to possess more than a prospective influence, would carry the reform from which his elders recoiled, and gift the prince-opposing Whig-Radical with a pension, under the gracious countenance of a queen whom the Radical loves. I think the *Edinburgh Review* might have noticed my books a little oftener. I am sure it would have done me a great deal of worldly good by it, and itself no harm in these progressing days of criticism. But I said nothing on the subject, and may have been thought indifferent.

Of Mr. Blanco White, thus brought to my recollection, a good deal is known in certain political and religious quarters; but it may be new to many readers, that he was an Anglo-Spaniard, who was forced to quit the Peninsula for his liberal opinions, and who died in his adopted country not long ago, after many years' endeavour to come to some positive faith within the Christian pale. At the time I knew him he had not long arrived from Spain, and was engaged, or about to be engaged, as tutor to the present Lord Holland. Though English by name and origin, he was more of the Spaniard in appearance, being very unlike the portrait prefixed to his *Life and Correspondence*. At least, he must have greatly altered from what he was when I knew

him, if that portrait ever resembled him. He had a long pale face, with prominent drooping nose, anxious and somewhat staring eyes, and a mouth turning down at the corners. I believe there was not an honester man in the world, or one of an acuter intellect, short of the mischief that had been done it by a melancholy temperament and a superstitious training. It is distressing, in the work alluded to, to see what a torment the intellect may be rendered to itself by its own sharpness, in its efforts to make its way to conclusions, equally unnecessary to discover and impossible to be arrived at.

But, perhaps, there was something naturally self-tormenting in the state of Mr. White's blood. The first time I met him at a friend's house, he was suffering under the calumnies of his countrymen; and though of extremely gentle manners in ordinary, he almost startled me by suddenly turning round, and saying, in one of those incorrect foreign sentences which force one to be relieved while they startle, "If they proceed more, I will go mad."

In like manner, while he was giving me the Holland-house invitation, and telling me of the amusement derived from the pathetic cod's head and shoulders, he looked so like the piscatory bust which he was describing, that with all my respect for his patriotism and his sorrows, I could not help partaking of the unlucky tendency of my country-

men to be amused, in spite of myself, with the involuntary burlesque.

Mr. White, on his arrival in England, was so anxious a student of the language, that he noted down in a pocket-book every phrase which struck him as remarkable. Observing the words "Cannon Brewery" on premises then standing in Knightsbridge, and taking the figure of a cannon which was over them, as the sign of the commodity dealt in, he put down as a nicety of speech, "The English *brew* cannon."

Another time, seeing maid-servants walking with children in a nursery-garden, he rejoiced in the progeny-loving character of the people among whom he had come, and wrote down, "Public gardens provided for nurses, in which they take the children to walk."

This gentleman, who had been called "Blanco" in Spain—which was a translation of his family name "White," and who afterwards wrote an excellent English book of entertaining letters on the Peninsula, under the Græco-Spanish appellation of Don Leucadio Doblado (White Doubled)—was author of a sonnet which Coleridge pronounced to be the best in the English language. I know not what Mr. Wordsworth said on this judgment. Perhaps he wrote fifty sonnets on the spot to disprove it. And in truth it was a bold sentence, and probably spoken

out of a kindly, though not conscious, spirit of exaggeration. The sonnet, nevertheless, is truly beautiful.

As I do not like to have such things referred to without being shown them, in case I have not seen them before, I shall do as I would be done by, and lay it before the reader:—

"Mysterious night! when our first parent knew
Thee, from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,—
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet, 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame
Hesperus, with the host of heaven, came,
And, lo! creation widened in Man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REGENT AND THE EXAMINER.

"The Prince on St. Patrick's Day."—Indictment for an attack on the Regent in that article.—Present feelings of the writer on the subject.—Real sting of the offence in the article.—Sentence of the proprietors of the Examiner *to an imprisonment for two years.—Their rejection of two proposals of compromise.—Lord Ellenborough, Mr. Garrow, and Mr. Justice Grose.*

EVERYTHING having been thus prepared by myself, as well as by others, for a good blow at the *Examiner*, the ministers did not fail to strike it.

There was an annual dinner of the Irish on Saint Patrick's Day, at which the Prince of Wales's name used to be the reigning and rapturous toast, as that of the greatest friend they possessed in the United Kingdom. He was held to be the jovial advocate of liberality in all things, and sponsor in particular for concession to the Catholic claims. But the Prince of Wales, now become Prince Regent, had retained

the Tory ministers of his father; he had broken life-long engagements; had violated his promises, particular as well as general, those to the Catholics among them; and led *in toto* a different political life from what had been expected. The name, therefore, which used to be hailed with rapture, was now, at the dinner in question, received with hisses.

An article appeared on the subject in the *Examiner;* the attorney-general's eye was swiftly upon the article; and the result to the proprietors was two years' imprisonment, with a fine, to each, of five hundred pounds. I shall relate the story of my imprisonment a few pages onward. Much as it injured me, I cannot wish that I had evaded it, for I believe that it did good, and I should have suffered far worse in the self-abasement. Neither have I any quarrel, at this distance of time, with the Prince Regent; for though his frivolity, his tergiversation, and his treatment of his wife, will not allow me to respect his memory, I am bound to pardon it as I do my own faults, in consideration of the circumstances which mould the character of every human being. Could I meet him in some odd corner of the Elysian fields, where charity had room for both of us, I should first apologize to him for having been the instrument in the hand of events for attacking a fellow-creature, and then expect to hear him avow

as hearty a regret for having injured myself, and unjustly treated his wife.

Having made these acknowledgments, I here repeat the article in which the libel appeared, in order that people may see how far it was excusable or otherwise under the circumstances, and whether the acknowledgments are sufficing. I would rather, for obvious reasons, both personal to myself and otherwise, have repeated nothing whatsoever against any individual of her Majesty's kindred, however differently constituted from herself, or however strong and obvious the line which everybody can draw between portions of the same family at different periods of time, and under different circumstances of breeding and connection. A man may have had a quarrel with Charles the Second (many a man did have one), without bringing into question his loyalty to Queen Mary or Queen Anne. Nay, his loyalty may have been the greater, and was; nor (as I have said elsewhere) could I have felt so much respect, and done my best to show it, for the good qualities of Queen Victoria, had I not been impressed in a different manner by the faults of her kinsmen. But having committed myself to the task of recording these events in the history of the *Examiner*, I could not but render the narrative complete.

THE PRINCE ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

(*Examiner*, *No.* 221; *Sunday*, *Mar.* 22, 1812.)

The Prince Regent is still in everybody's mouth; and, unless he is as insensible to biting as to bantering, a delicious time he has of it in that remorseless ubiquity. If a person takes in a newspaper, the first thing he does, when he looks at it, is to give the old groan and say, 'Well! what of the Prince Regent now!' If he goes out after breakfast, the first friend he meets is sure to begin talking about the Prince Regent; and the two always separate with a shrug. He who is lounging along the street will take your arm, and turn back with you to expatiate on the Prince Regent; and he in a hurry, who is skimming the other side of the way, halloes out as he goes, 'Fine things these, of the Prince Regent!' You can scarcely pass by two people talking together, but you shall hear the words 'Prince Regent;'—'if the Prince Regent has done that, he must be—' or such as 'the Prince Regent and Lord Yar—' the rest escapes in the distance. At dinner the Prince Regent quite eclipses the goose or the calf's-head; the tea-table, of course, rings of the Prince Regent; if the company go to the theatre to see *The Hypocrite*, or the new farce of *Turn Out*, they cannot help thinking of the Prince Regent; and, as Dean Swift extracted philosophical meditation from a broomstick, so it would not be surprising if any serious person, in going to bed, should find in his very nightcap something to remind him of the merits of the Prince Regent. In short, there is no other subject but one that can at all pretend to a place in the attention of our countrymen, and that is their old topic, the weather; their whole sympathies are at present divided between the Prince Regent and the barometer.

"Nocte pluit totâ: redeunt spectacula manè;—
Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet.

VIRGIL.

All night the weeping tempests blow;
All day our state surpasseth show;—
Doubtless a blessed empire share
The Prince of Wales and Prince of Air.

But the ministerial journalists, and other creatures of Government, will tell you, that there is nothing in all this; or rather, they will insist that it is to be taken in a good sense, and that the universal talk respecting the Prince Regent is highly to his advantage; for it is to be remarked, that these gentlemen have a pleasant way of proving to us that we have neither eyes nor ears; and would willingly persuade us in time, that to call a man an idiot or a profligate is subscribing to his wisdom and virtue;—a logic, by-the-by, which enables us to discover how it is they turn their own reputation to account, and contrive to have so good an opinion of themselves. Thus, whenever they perceive an obnoxious sensation excited among the people by particular measures, they always affect to confine it to the organs by which it is expressed, and cry out against what they are pleased to term "a few factious individuals," who are represented as a crafty set of fellows, that get their living by contradicting and disgusting everybody else! How such a trade can be thriving, we are not informed: it is certainly a very different one from their own, which, however it may disgust other people, succeeds by echoing and flattering the opinions of men in power. It is in vain that you refer them to human nature, and to the opinions that are naturally created by profligate rulers: they are not acquainted with human nature, and still less with any such rulers;—it is in vain that

you refer them to companies;—it is in vain that you refer them to popular meetings, to common-halls of their own. Be it so, then; let us compound with them, and agree to consider all direct political meetings as party assemblages, particularly those of the Reformists, who, whatever room they may occupy on the occasion, and whatever advocates they may possess from one end of the kingdom to another, shall be nothing but a few factious individuals, as contemptible for their numbers and public effect, as for their bad writing and worse principles. Nay, let us even resort on this occasion to persons, who, having but one great political object, unconnected with the abstract merits of party, persisted for so many years in expressing an ardent and hopeful attachment to the Prince Regent, and in positively shutting their eyes to such parts of his character as might have shaken their dependence upon him, looking only to his succession in the government as the day of their country's happiness, and caring not who should surround his throne, provided he would only be true to his own word. An assembly of such persons—such, at least, was their composition for the much greater part—met the other day at the Freemasons' Tavern, to celebrate the Irish anniversary of Saint Patrick; and I shall proceed to extract from the *Morning Chronicle* such passages of what passed on the occasion as apply to his Royal Highness, in order that the reader may see at once what is now thought of him, not by Whigs and Pittites, or any other party of the state, but by the fondest and most trusting of his fellow-subjects—by those whose hearts have danced at his name, who have caught from it inspiration to their poetry, patience to their afflictions, and hope to their patriotism.

"The anniversary of this day—a day always precious in the estimation of an Irishman—was celebrated yesterday at the Freemasons' Tavern, by a numerous and highly respectable

assemblage of individuals. The Marquis of Lansdowne presided at the meeting, supported by the Marquis of Downshire, the Earl of Moira, Mr. Sheridan, the Lord Mayor, Mr. Sheriff Heygate, &c. &c. When the cloth was removed, *Non Nobis Domine* was sung, after which the Marquis of Lansdowne, premising that the meeting was assembled for purposes of charity, rather than of party or political feeling, gave 'the health of the King,' which was drunk with enthusiastic and rapturous applause. This was followed by *God save the King*, and then the Noble Marquis gave 'the health of the Prince Regent,' which was drunk with partial applause, and *loud and reiterated hisses.* The next toast, which called forth great and continued applause, lasting nearly five minutes, was 'the Navy and Army.'"

The interests of the Charity were then considered, and, after a procession of the children (a sight worth all the gaudy and hollow flourish of military and courtly pomps), a very handsome collection was made from the persons present. Upon this, the toasts were resumed; and 'Lord Moira's health being drunk with loud and reiterated cheering,' his Lordship made a speech, in which *not a word was uttered of the Regent.* Here let the reader pause a moment, and consider what a quantity of meaning must be wrapped up in the silence of such a man with regard to his old companion and Prince. Lord Moira universally bears the character of a man who is generous to a fault; he is even said to be almost unacquainted with the language of denial or rebuke; and if this part of his character has been injurious to him, it has at least, with his past and his present experience, helped him to a thorough knowledge of the Prince's character. Yet this nobleman, so generous, so kindly affectioned, so well experienced,—even he has nothing to say in favour of his old acquaintance. The Prince has had obligations

from him, and therefore his Lordship feels himself bound, in gentlemanly feeling, to say nothing in his disparagement; and, in spite of the additional tenderness which that very circumstance would give him for the better side of his Royal Highness's character, he feels himself bound in honesty to say nothing in his praise,—not a word,—not a syllable! No more need be observed on this point. His Lordship concluded with proposing the health of the Marquis of Lansdowne, who, upon receiving the applause of the company, expressed himself 'deeply sensible of such an honour coming from men whose national character it was to be generously warm in their praise, but not more generously warm than faithfully sincere.' This elegant compliment was justly received, and told more perhaps than everybody imagined; for those who are 'faithfully sincere' in their praise are apt to be equally so in their censure, and thus the hisses bestowed were put on an equal footing of sincerity with the applause. The healths of the Vice-Presidents was then given, and after a short speech from Lord Mountjoy, and much *anticipating* clamour with 'Mr. Sheridan's health,' Mr. Sheridan *at length* arose, and in a low tone of voice returned his thanks for the honourable notice by which so large a meeting of his countrymen thought proper to distinguish him. (*Applause.*) He had ever been proud of Ireland, and hoped that his country might never have cause to be ashamed of him. (*Applause.*) Ireland never forgot those who did all they could do, however little that might be, in behalf of her best interests. All allusion to politics had been industriously deprecated by their noble Chairman. He was aware that charity was the immediate object of their meeting; but standing as he did before an assembly of his countrymen, he could not affect to disguise his conviction, that at the present crisis Ireland involved in itself every consideration dear to the best interests of the

empire. (*Hear, hear.*) It was, therefore, that he was most anxious that nothing should transpire in that meeting calculated to injure those great objects, or to visit with undeserved censure the conduct of persons whose love to Ireland was as cordial and as zealous as it ever had been. He confessed frankly, that, knowing as he did the unaltered and unalterable sentiments of one *illustrious personage* towards Ireland, he could not conceal from the meeting that he had felt considerably shocked at the *sulky coldness* and *surly discontent* with which they had on that evening drank the health of the Prince Regent. (Here we are sorry to observe that Mr. S. was interrupted by *no very equivocal* symptoms of disapprobation.) When silence was somewhat restored, Mr. Sheridan said that he *knew the Prince Regent well*—(*hisses*)—he knew his *principles*—(*hisses*)—they would, at least he hoped, give him credit for believing that he knew them when he said he did. (*Applause.*) He repeated, that he knew well the principles of the Prince Regent, and that so well satisfied was he that they were all that Ireland could wish, that he (Mr. Sheridan) hoped, that as he had lived up to them, so he might die in the principles of the Prince Regent. (*Hisses and applause.*) He should be sorry personally to have merited their disapprobation. (*General applause*, with cries of 'Change the subject, and speak out.") He could only assure them, that the Prince Regent remained unchangeably true to those principles. (*Here the clamours became so loud and general that we could collect nothing more.*)

Although the company, however, refused to give a quiet hearing to Mr. Sheridan while he talked in this manner, yet the moment he sat down they rose up, it seems, and, as a mark that they were not personally offended, gave him a general clap:—the *Chronicle* says it was 'to mark their peculiar respect and

esteem for him;' and as the rest of the above report is taken from that paper, it is fit that this encomiastic assertion should accompany it; but, however the reporter might choose to interpret it, there appears to be no reason for giving it a livelier construction than the one before mentioned. We know well enough what the Irish think of Mr. Sheridan. They believe he has been, and is, their friend; and on that account their gratitude will always endeavour to regard him as complacently as possible, and to separate what his masters can do from what he himself cannot:—it even prevents them, perhaps, from discerning the harm which a man of his lax turn of thinking, in countenancing the loose principles of another, may have done to the cause which he hoped to assist; but they are not blind to his defects in general any more than the English; and after the terrible example that has been furnished us for the bad effects of those principles, 'peculiar respect and esteem' are words not to be prostituted to every occasion of convivial good temper. It is too late to let a contingent and partial good-will exaggerate in this manner, and throw away the panegyrics that belong to first-rate worthiness.

"But to return to the immediate subject. Here is an assembly of Irishmen, respectable for their rank and benevolence, and desirous, for years, of thinking well of the Prince of Wales, absolutely loading with contempt the very mention of his 'principles,' and shutting their ears against a repetition of the word—so great is their disdain and their indignation. Principles! How are we to judge of principles but by conduct? And what, in the name of common-sense, does Mr. Sheridan mean by saying that the Prince adheres to his principles? Was it a principle then in his Royal Highness not to adhere to his professions and promises? And is it in keeping to such a principle, that Mr. Sheridan informs us and 'the public in general,'

that he means to live and die in the principles of his master? What did Lord Moira, the Marquis Lansdowne, or the Duke of Devonshire say to these praises? Did they anticipate or echo them? No; *they kept a dead silence*; and for this conscientiousness they are reproved by the ministerial papers, which pathetically tell us how good his royal highness has been to the charity, and what a shame it was to mingle political feelings with the objects of such a meeting! Political candour, they mean: had it been political flattery, they would not have cared what had been said of the Prince Regent, nor how many foreign questions had been discussed. It might have been proper in the meeting, had it been possible, to distinguish between the Prince of Wales as a subscriber to the Irish charity, and the Prince of Wales as a clencher of Irish chains; but when the health of such a personage is proposed to such a meeting, political considerations are notoriously supposed to be implied in the manner of its reception, and had the reception been favourable, the ministerialists would have been as eager to take advantage of it as they now are to take umbrage. So much for the inevitable disclosure of truth, in one way or another; and thus has the very first utterance of the public opinion, *vivâ voce*, been loud and unequivocal in rebuke of the Prince Regent.

It is impossible, however, before the present article is closed, to resist an observation or two on the saddest of these ministerial papers. Our readers are aware that the *Morning Post*, above all its rivals, has a faculty of carrying its nonsense to a pitch that becomes amusing in spite of itself, and affords relief to one's feelings in the very excess of its inflictions. Its paper of Thursday last, in answer to a real or pretended correspondent, contained the following paragraph:—'The publication of the article of a friend, relative to the ungenerous, unmanly conduct, displayed at a late public meeting, though evidently well meant,

would only serve to give consequence to a set of worthless beings, whose imbecile efforts are best treated with sovereign contempt.' *Worthless beings* and *sovereign contempt!* Who would not suppose that some lofty and exemplary character was here speaking of a set of informers and profligates? One, at any rate, whose notice was an honour, and whose silent disdain would keep the noisest of us in obscurity? Yet this is the paper, notorious above all others in the annals of perfidy, scandal, imbecility, and indecency—the paper which has gone directly from one side to another, and which has levied contributions upon this very Prince, which has become a by-word for its cant and bad writing, and which has rioted in a doggrel, an adulation, and a ribaldry, that none but the most prostituted pens would consent to use—the paper, in short, of the Stuarts, the Benjafields, the Byrnes, and the Rosa Matildas! and this delicious compound is to 'give consequence' to a society, consisting of the most respectable Irishmen in London, with rank and talent at their head! Help us, benevolent compositors, to some mark or other—some significant and comprehensive index—that shall denote a laugh of an hour's duration. If any one of our readers should not be so well acquainted as another with the taste and principles of this bewitching *Post*, he may be curious to see what notions of praise and political justice are entertained by the persons whose contempt is so overwhelming.

He shall have a specimen, and when he is reading it, let him lament, in the midst of his laughter, that a paper, capable of such sickening adulation, should have the power of finding its way to the table of an English prince, and of helping to endanger the country by polluting the sources of its Government. The same page, which contained the specimen of contempt abovementioned, contained also a set of wretched commonplace lines in French, Italian, Spanish, and English, *literally* addressing the

Prince Regent in the following terms, among others:—'You are the *Glory of the people*'—'You are the *Protector of the arts*'—'You are the *Mecænas of the age*'—'Wherever you appear *you conquer all hearts*, wipe away tears, excite *desire and love*, and win *beauty* towards you'—'You breathe *eloquence*'—'You inspire the Graces'—'You are *Adonis in loveliness!*' Thus gifted," it proceeds in English,—

'Thus gifted with each grace of mind,
Born to delight and bless mankind;
Wisdom, with Pleasure in her train,
Great prince! shall signalize thy reign:
To Honour, Virtue, Truth allied;
The nation's safeguard and its pride;
With monarchs of immortal fame
Shall bright renown enrol the name.'

"What person, unacquainted with the true state of the case, would imagine, in reading these astounding eulogies, that this '*Glory of the people*' was the subject of millions of shrugs and reproaches!—that this '*Protector of the arts*' had named a wretched foreigner his historical painter, in disparagement or in ignorance of the merits of his own countrymen!—that this '*Mecænas of the age*' patronized not a single deserving writer!—that this '*Breather of eloquence*' could not say a few decent extempore words—if we are to judge, at least, from what he said to his regiment on its embarkation for Portugal!—that this '*Conqueror of hearts*' was the disappointer of hopes!—that this '*Exciter of desire*' [bravo! Messieurs of the *Post!*]—this '*Adonis in loveliness*' was a corpulent man of fifty!—in short, that this *delightful*, *blissful*, *wise*, *pleasurable*, *honourable*, *virtuous*, *true*, and *immortal* prince, was a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has

just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country, or the respect of posterity!

These are hard truths; but are they *not* truths? And have we not suffered enough—are we not now suffering bitterly—from the disgusting flatteries of which the above is a repetition? The ministers may talk of the shocking boldness of the press, and may throw out their wretched warnings about interviews between Mr. Percival and Sir Vicary Gibbs; but let us inform them, that such vices as have just been enumerated are shocking to all Englishmen who have a just sense of the state of Europe; and that he is a bolder man, who, in times like the present, dares to afford reason for the description. Would to God, the *Examiner* could ascertain that difficult, and perhaps undiscoverable, point which enables a public writer to keep clear of an appearance of the love of scandal, while he is hunting out the vices of those in power! Then should one paper, at least, in this metropolis help to rescue the nation from the charge of silently encouraging what it must publicly rue; and the Sardanapalus who is now afraid of none but informers, be taught to shake, in the midst of his minions, in the very drunkenness of his heart, at the voice of honesty. But if this be impossible, still there is one benefit which truth may derive from adulation—one benefit which is favourable to the former in proportion to the grossness of the latter, and of which none of his flatterers seem to be aware—the opportunity of contradicting its assertions. Let us never forget this advantage, which adulation cannot help giving us; and let such of our readers as are inclined to deal insincerely with the great from a false notion of policy and of knowledge of the world, take warning from what we now see of the miserable effects of courtly disguise, paltering, and profligacy. Flattery in any shape is unworthy a man and a gentleman; but political flattery is almost

a request to be made slaves. If we would have the great to be what they ought, we must find some means or other to speak of them as they are."

This article, no doubt, was very bitter and contemptuous; therefore, in the legal sense of the term, very libellous; the more so, inasmuch as it was very true. There will be no question about the truth of it, at this distance of time, with any class of persons, unless, possibly, with some few of the old Tories, who may think it was a patriotic action in the Prince to have displaced the Whigs for their opponents. But I believe, that under all the circumstances, there are few persons indeed nowadays, of my class, who will not be of opinion, that, bitter as the article was, it was more than sufficiently avenged by two years' imprisonment and a fine of a thousand pounds. For it did but express what all the world were feeling, with the exception of the Prince's once bitterest enemies, the Tories themselves, then newly become his friends; and its very sincerity and rashness, had the Prince possessed greatness of mind enough to think so, might have furnished him such a ground for pardoning it, as would have been the best proof he could have given us of our having mistaken him, and turned us into blushing and grateful friends. An attempt to bribe us on the side of fear, did but further disgust us. A free and noble waiving of the punishment would

have bowed our hearts into regret. We should have found in it the evidence of that true generosity of nature paramount to whatsoever was frivolous or appeared to be mean, which his flatterers claimed for him, and which would have made us doubly blush for the formal virtues to which he seemed to be attached, when, in reality, nothing would have better pleased us than such a combination of the gay and the magnanimous. I say doubly blush, for I now blush at ever having been considered, or rather been willing to be considered, an advocate of any sort of conventionality, unqualified by liberal exceptions and prospective enlargement; and I am sure that my brother, had he been living, who was one of the best natured and most indulgent of men, would have joined with me in making the same concession; though I am bound to add, that, with all his good sense, and all his indulgence of others, I have no reason to believe that he had ever stood in need of that pardon for even conventional license, from the necessity of which I cannot pretend to have been exempt. I had never, to be sure, affected to denounce poor Mrs. Robinson and others, as Gifford had done; nor did I afterwards condescend to make concessions about poor Queen Caroline, while I denounced those who had no right to demand them. All the airs which I gave myself as a censor were over men; and I should have blushed indeed at any time, to have

given myself those, had the men combined anything like generosity with license.

I now think, that although for many reasons connected with a long career of literature as well as politics, and for the general spirit of both, I fully deserve the pension which a liberal minister and a gracious queen have bestowed on me, I had no right in particular instances, and in my own person, to demand more virtues from any human being than nature and education had given him, or to denounce his faults without giving him the excuse of those circumstances, and freely confessing my own. I think that the world is best served in any respect, in proportion as we dig into the first roots of error, and cease blaming the poor boughs which they injure. No man has any more right than another to

> "Compound for sins he is inclined to,
> By damning those he has no mind to."

If I thought the Prince of Wales a coxcomb in one sense of the word, he might have been fully justified in thinking me one in another. If I seemed to demand, that his life should be spotless, he might reasonably have turned upon me, and asked whether I was spotless myself. If I disliked him because he was selfish and ungenerous, he might have asked where was the generosity of forgetting the luxury

in which he had been brought up, my own poverty of nurture on the other hand, and the master, who was ready to flog instead of flatter me, whenever I did not behave as I ought.

It is understood, after all, that the sting of the article lay not in the gravest portion of it, but in the lightest;—in the banter about the "Adonis" and the "corpulent gentleman of fifty." The serious remarks might have been endured, on the assumption that they themselves were an assumption; but to be touched where the claim to admiration was at once obvious and preposterous, was intolerable. Hence the general impression was, and is, that we were sent to prison, because we said the Prince Regent was fat. Now, the truth is, I had no wish to speak of his fat, or to allude to his person in any way. Nor did I intend even to banter him in a spirit of levity. I was very angry with the flattery, and ridicule was the natural answer to it. It was natural enough in the Prince not to like to give up his fine dressing and his youthful pretensions; for he was not wise, and he had been very handsome;—

"The glass of fashion, and the mould of form."

But his adulators had no such excuse; and I was provoked to see them encouraging the weakest of his mistakes, when the most important questions of state were demanding his attention, and meeting, I

thought, with nothing but the unhandsomest tergiversation.

I have spoken of an attempt to bribe us. We were given to understand, through the medium of a third person, but in a manner emphatically serious and potential, that if we would abstain in future from commenting upon the actions of the royal personage, means would be found to prevent our going to prison. The same offer was afterwards repeated, as far as the payment of a fine was concerned, upon our going thither. I need not add, that we declined both. We do not mean to affirm, that these offers came directly or indirectly from the quarter in which they might be supposed to originate; but we know the immediate quarter from which they did come; and this we may affirm, that of all the "two hundred and fifty particular friends," who dined on a former occasion at Carlton House, his Royal Highness had not one more zealous or liberal in his behalf.

The expectation of a prison was in one respect very formidable to me; for I had been a long time in a bad state of health. I was suffering under the worst of those hypochondriacal attacks which I have described in a former chapter; and when notice was given that we were to be brought up for judgment, I had just been advised by the physician to take exercise every day on horseback, and go down to

the sea-side. I was resolved, however, to do no disgrace either to the courage which I really possessed, or to the example set me by my excellent brother. I accordingly put my countenance in its best trim; I made a point of wearing my best apparel; and descended into the legal arena to be sentenced gallantly. As an instance of the imagination which I am accustomed to mingle with everything, I was at that time reading a little work, to which Milton is indebted, the *Comus* of Erycius Puteanus; and this, which is a satire on "Bachusses and their revellers," I pleased myself with having in my pocket.

It is necessary, on passing sentence for a libel, to read over again the words that composed it. This was the business of Lord Ellenborough, who baffled the attentive audience in a very ingenious manner by affecting every instant to hear a noise, and calling upon the officers of the court to prevent it. Mr. Garrow, the attorney-general (who had succeeded Sir Vicary Gibbs at a very cruel moment, for the indictment had been brought by that irritable person, and was the first against us which took effect), behaved to us with a politeness that was considered extraordinary. Not so Mr. Justice Grose, who delivered the sentence. To be didactic and old-womanish seemed to belong to his nature; but to lecture us on pandering to the public appetite for scandal, was what we could not so easily bear. My

brother, as I had been the writer, expected me, perhaps, to be the spokesman; and speak I certainly should have done, had I not been prevented by the dread of that hesitation in my speech, to which I had been subject when a boy, and the fear of which (perhaps idly, for I hesitated at that time least among strangers, and very rarely do so at all) has been the main cause, perhaps, why I have appeared and acted in public less than any other public man. There is reason to think, that Lord Ellenborough was still less easy than ourselves. He knew that we were acquainted with his visits to Carlton-house and Brighton (sympathies not eminently decent in a judge,) and with the good things which he had obtained for his kinsmen; and we could not help preferring our feelings at the moment to those which induced him to keep his eyes fixed on his papers, which he did almost the whole time of our being in court, never turning them once to the place on which we stood. There were divers other points, too, on which he had some reason to fear that we might choose to return the lecture of the bench. He did not even look at us, when he asked, in the course of his duty, whether it was our wish to make any remarks. I answered, that we did not wish to make any *there;* and Mr. Justice Grose proceeded to pass sentence. At the sound of two years' imprisonment in separate jails, my brother and myself in-

stinctively pressed each other's arm. It was a heavy blow; but the pressure that acknowledged it, encouraged the resolution to bear it; and I do not believe that either of us interchanged a word afterwards on the subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

IMPRISONMENT.

Author's imprisonment.—Curious specimen of a jailer, an under-jailer, and an under-jailer's wife.—Mr. Holme Sumner.—Conversion of a room in a prison into a fairy bower.—Author's visitors.—A heart-rending spectacle.—Felons and debtors.—Restoration to Freedom.

We parted in hackney-coaches to our respective abodes, accompanied by two tipstaves apiece.

They prepared me for a singular character in my jailer. His name was Ives. I was told he was a very self-willed personage, not the more accommodating for being in a bad state of health; and that he called everybody *Mister*. "In short," said one of the tipstaves, "he is one as may be led, but he'll never be *druv*."

The sight of the prison-gate and the high wall was a dreary business. I thought of my horseback and the downs of Brighton; but congratulated myself, at all events, that I had come thither with a good conscience. After waiting in the prison-yard as long as

if it had been the anteroom of a minister, I was ushered into the presence of the great man. He was in his parlour, which was decently furnished, and had a basin of broth before him, which he quitted on my appearance, and rose with much solemnity to meet me. He seemed about fifty years of age. He had a white night-cap on, as if he was going to be hung, and a great red face, which looked ready to burst with blood. Indeed, he was not allowed by his physician to speak in a tone above a whisper.

The first thing which this dignified person said was, "Mister, I'd ha' given a matter of a hundred pounds, that you had not come to this place—a hundred pounds!" The emphasis which he had laid on the word "hundred" was ominous.

I forgot what I answered. I endeavoured, to make the best of the matter; but he recurred over and over again to the hundred pounds; and said he wondered, for his part, what the Government meant by sending me there, for the prison was not a prison fit for a gentleman. He often repeated this opinion afterwards, adding, with a peculiar nod of his head, and "Mister, they knows it."

I said, that if a gentleman deserved to be sent to prison, he ought not to be treated with a greater nicety than any one else: upon which he corrected me, observing very properly (though, as the phrase

is, it was one word for the gentleman and two for the letter of prison-lodgings), that a person who had been used to a better mode of living than "low people," was not treated with the same justice, if forced to lodge exactly as they did.

I told him his observation was very true; which gave him a favourable opinion of my understanding: for I had many occasions of remarking, that he looked upon nobody as his superior, speaking even of the members of the royal family as persons whom he knew very well, and whom he estimated no more than became him. One royal duke had lunched in his parlour, and another he had laid under some polite obligation. "They knows me," said he, "very well, Mister; and, Mister, I knows them." This concluding sentence he uttered with great particularity and precision.

He was not proof, however, against a Greek Pindar, which he happened to light upon one day among my books. Its unintelligible character gave him a notion that he had got somebody to deal with who might really know something which he did not. Perhaps the gilt leaves and red morocco binding had their share in the magic. The upshot was, that he always showed himself anxious to appear well with me, as a clever fellow, treating me with great civility on all occasions but one, when I made him very angry by disappointing him in a money amount.

The Pindar was a mystery that staggered him. I remember very well, that giving me a long account one day of something connected with his business, he happened to catch with his eye the shelf that contained it, and whether he saw it or not, abruptly finished by observing, "But, Mister, you knows all these things as well as I do."

Upon the whole, my new acquaintance was as strange a person as I ever met with. A total want of education, together with a certain vulgar acuteness, conspired to render him insolent and pedantic. Disease sharpened his tendency to fits of passion, which threatened to suffocate him; and then in his intervals of better health he would issue forth, with his cock-up-nose and his hat on one side, as great a fop as a jockey. I remember his coming to my rooms, about the middle of my imprisonment, as if on purpose to insult over my ill health with the contrast of his convalescence, putting his arms in a gay manner a-kimbo, and telling me I should never live to go out, whereas he was riding about as stout as ever, and had just been in the country. He died before I left prison.

The word *jail*, in deference to the way in which it is sometimes spelt, this accomplished individual pronounced *gole;* and Mr. Brougham he always spoke of as Mr. *Bruffam.* He one day apologized for this mode of pronunciation, or rather gave a specimen of

vanity and self-will, which will show the reader the high notions a jailer may entertain of himself. "I find," said he, "that they calls him *Broom;* but, Mister" (assuming a look from which there was to be no appeal), "*I* calls him *Bruffam!*"

Finding that my host did not think the prison fit for me, I asked if he could let me have an apartment in his house. He pronounced it impossible; which was a trick to enhance the price. I could not make an offer to please him; and he stood out so long, and, as he thought, so cunningly, that he subsequently overreached himself by his trickery; as the reader will see. His object was to keep me among the prisoners, till he could at once sicken me of the place, and get the permission of the magistrates to receive me into his house; which was a thing he reckoned upon as a certainty. He thus hoped to secure himself in all quarters; for his vanity was almost as strong as his avarice. He was equally fond of getting money in private, and of the approbation of the great men whom he had to deal with in public; and it so happened, that there had been no prisoner, above the poorest condition, before my arrival, with the exception of Colonel Despard. From abusing the prison, he then suddenly fell to speaking well of it, or rather of the room occupied by the colonel; and said, that another corresponding with it would make me a capital apartment. "To

be sure," said he, "there is nothing but bare walls, and I have no bed to put in it." I replied, that of course I should not be hindered from having my own bed from home. He said, "No; and if it rains," observed he, "you have only to put up with want of light for a time." "What!" exclaimed I, "are there no windows?" "Windows, Mister!" cried he; "no windows in a prison of this sort; no glass, Mister: but excellent shutters."

It was finally agreed, that I should sleep for a night or two in a garret of the jailer's house, till my bed could be got ready in the prison and the windows glazed. A dreary evening followed, which, however, let me completely into the man's character, and showed him in a variety of lights, some ludicrous, and others as melancholy. There was a full-length portrait in the room, of a little girl, dizzened out in her best. This, he told me, was his daughter, whom he had disinherited for her disobedience. I tried to suggest a few reflections, capable of doing her service; but disobedience, I found, was an offence doubly irritating to his nature, on account of his sovereign habits as a jailer; and seeing his irritability likely to inflame the plethora of his countenance, I desisted. Though not allowed to speak above a whisper, he was extremely willing to talk; but at an early hour I pleaded my own state of health, and retired to bed.

On taking possession of my garret, I was treated

with a piece of delicacy, which I never should have thought of finding in a prison. When I first entered its walls, I had been received by the under-jailer, a man who seemed an epitome of all that was forbidding in his office. He was short and very thick, had a hook nose, a great severe countenance, and a bunch of keys hanging on his arm. A friend stopped short at sight of him, and said in a melancholy tone, 'And this is the jailer!'

Honest old *Cave!* thine outside would have been unworthy of thee, if upon further acquaintance I had not found it a very hearty outside,—ay, and in my eyes, a very good-looking one, and as fit to contain the milk of human-kindness that was in thee, as the husk of a cocoa. To show by one specimen the character of this man,—I could never prevail on him to accept any acknowledgment of his kindness, greater than a set of tea-things, and a piece or two of old furniture which I could not well carry away. I had, indeed, the pleasure of leaving him in possession of a room which I had papered; but this was a thing unexpected, and which neither of us had supposed could be done. Had I been a prince, I would have forced on him a pension; being a journalist, I made him accept an *Examiner* weekly, which he lived for some years to relish his Sunday pipe with.

This man, in the interval between my arrival and introduction to the head-jailer, had found means to

give me farther information respecting my condition, and to express the interest he took in it? I thought little of his offers at the time. He behaved with the greatest air of deference to his principal; moving as fast as his body would allow him, to execute his least intimation; and holding the candle to him while he read, with an obsequious zeal. But he had spoken to his wife about me, and his wife I found to be as great a curiosity as himself. Both were more like the romantic jailers drawn in some of our modern plays, than real Horsemonger-lane palpabilities The wife, in her person, was as light and fragile as the husband was sturdy. She had the nerves of a fine lady, and yet went through the most unpleasant duties with the patience of a martyr. Her voice and look seemed to plead for a softness like their own, as if a loud reply would have shattered her. Ill health had made her a Methodist, but this did not hinder her from sympathizing with an invalid who was none, or from loving a husband who was as little of a saint as need be. Upon the whole, such an extraordinary couple, so apparently unsuitable, and yet so fitted for one another; so apparently vulgar on one side, and yet so naturally delicate on both; so misplaced in their situation, and yet for the good of others so admirably put there, I have never met with before or since.

It was the business of this woman to lock me up

in my garret; but she did it so softly the first night, that I knew nothing of the matter. The night following, I thought I heard a gentle tampering with the lock. I tried it, and found it fastened. She heard me as she was going down-stairs, and said the next day, "Ah, sir, I thought I should have turned the key so as for you not to hear it; but I found you did." The whole conduct of this couple towards us, from first to last, was of a piece with this singular delicacy.

My bed was shortly put up, and I slept in my new room. It was on an upper story, and stood in a corner of the quadrangle, on the right hand as you enter the prison-gate. The windows (which had now been accommodated with glass, in addition to their "excellent shutters") were high up, and barred; but the room was large and airy, and there was a fireplace. It was intended to be a common room for the prisoners on that story; but the cells were then empty. The cells were ranged on either side of the arcade, of which the story is formed, and the room opened at the end of it. At night-time the door was locked; then another on the top of the staircase, then another on the middle of the staircase, then a fourth at the bottom, a fifth, that shut up the little yard belonging to that quarter, and how many more, before you got out of the gates, I forget: but I do not exaggerate when I say there were ten or eleven.

The first night I slept there, I listened to them, one after the other, till the weaker part of my heart died within me. Every fresh turning of the key seemed a malignant insult to my love of liberty. I was alone, and away from my family; I, who to this day have never slept from home above a dozen weeks in my life. Furthermore, the reader will bear in mind that I was ill. With a great flow of natural spirits, I was subject to fits of nervousness, which had latterly taken a more continued shape. I felt one of them coming on, and having learned to anticipate and break the force of it by exercise, I took a stout walk by pacing backwards and forwards for the space of three hours. This threw me into a state in which rest, for rest's sake, became pleasant. I got hastily into bed, and slept without a dream till morning.

By the way, I never dreamt of prison but twice all the time I was there, and my dream was the same on both occasions. I fancied I was at the theatre, and that the whole house looked at me in surprise, as much as to say, "How could he get out of prison?"

I saw my wife for a few minutes after I entered the jail, but she was not allowed on that day to stop longer. The next day she was with me for some hours. To say that she never reproached me for these and the like taxes upon our family prospects, is to say little. A world of comfort for me

was in her face. There is a note in the fifth volume of my Spenser, which I was then reading, in these words:—"February 4th, 1813." The line to which it refers is this:—

> "Much dearer be the things which come through hard distresse."

I now applied to the magistrates for permission to have my wife and children constantly with me, which was granted. Not so my request to move into the jailer's house. Mr. Holme Sumner, on occasion of a petition from a subsequent prisoner, told the House of Commons that my room had a view over the Surrey hills, and that I was very well content with it. I could not feel obliged to him for this postliminious piece of enjoyment, especially when I remembered that he had done all in his power to prevent my removal out of the room, precisely (as it appeared to us), because it looked upon nothing but the felons, and because I was *not* contented. In fact, you could not see out of the windows at all, without getting on a chair; and then, all that you saw, was the miserable men whose chains had been clanking from daylight. The perpetual sound of these chains wore upon my spirits in a manner to which my state of health allowed me reasonably to object. The yard, also, in which I took exercise, was very small. The jailer proposed that I should be allowed to occupy apart-

ments in his house, and walk occasionally in the prison garden; adding, that I should certainly die if I did not; and his opinion was seconded by that of the medical man. Mine host was sincere in this, if in nothing else. Telling us, one day, how warmly he had put it to the magistrates, and how he insisted that I should not survive, he turned round upon me, and, to the doctor's astonishment, added, "Nor, Mister, will you." I believe it was the opinion of many; but Mr. Holme Sumner argued otherwise; perhaps from his own sensations, which were sufficiently iron. Perhaps he concluded, also, like a proper old Tory, that if I did not think fit to flatter the magistrates a little, and play the courtier, my wants could not be very great. At all events, he came up one day with the rest of them, and after bowing to my wife, and piteously pinching the cheek of an infant in her arms, went down and did all he could to prevent our being comfortably situated.

The doctor then proposed that I should be removed into the prison infirmary; and this proposal was granted. Infirmary had, I confess, an awkward sound, even to my ears. I fancied a room shared with other sick persons, not the best fitted for companions; but the good-natured doctor (his name was Dixon) undeceived me. The infirmary was divided into four wards, with as many small rooms attached to them. The two upper wards were occupied, but

the two on the floor had never been used: and one of these, not very providently (for I had not yet learned to think of money) I turned into a noble room. I papered the walls with a trellis of roses; I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky; the barred windows I screened with Venetian blinds; and when my bookcases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. The surprise on issuing from the Borough, and passing through the avenues of a jail, was dramatic. Charles Lamb declared there was no other such room, except in a fairy tale.

But I possessed another surprise; which was a garden. There was a little yard outside the room, railed off from another belonging to the neighbouring ward. This yard I shut in with green palings, adorned it with a trellis, bordered it with a thick bed of earth from a nursery, and even contrived to have a grass-plot. The earth I filled with flowers and young trees. There was an apple-tree, from which we managed to get a pudding the second year. As to my flowers, they were allowed to be perfect. Thomas Moore, who came to see me with Lord Byron, told me he had seen no such heart's-ease. I bought the *Parnaso Italiano* while in prison, and

used often to think of a passage in it, while looking at this miniature piece of horticulture:—

"Mjo picciol orto,
A me sei vigna, e campo, e selva, e prato."
BALDI.
"My little garden,
To me thou 'rt vineyard, field, and meadow, and wood."

Here I wrote and read in fine weather, sometimes under an awning. In autumn, my trellises were hung with scarlet runners, which added to the flowery investment. I used to shut my eyes in my arm-chair, and affect to think myself hundreds of miles off.

But my triumph was in issuing forth of a morning. A wicket out of the garden led into the large one belonging to the prison. The latter was only for vegetables; but it contained a cherry-tree, which I saw twice in blossom. I parcelled out the ground in my imagination into favourite districts. I made a point of dressing myself as if for a long walk; and then, putting on my gloves, and taking my book under my arm, stepped forth, requesting my wife not to wait dinner if I was too late. My eldest little boy, to whom Lamb addressed some charming verses on the occasion, was my constant companion, and we used to play all sorts of juvenile games together. It was, probably, in dreaming of one of these games (but the words had a more touching effect on my

ear) that he exclaimed one night in his sleep, "No: I 'm not lost; I 'm found." Neither he nor I were very strong at that time; but I have lived to see him a man of forty; and wherever he is found, a generous hand and a great understanding will be found together.

I entered prison the 3rd of February 1813, and removed to my new apartments the 16th of March, happy to get out of the noise of the chains. When I sat amidst my books, and saw the imaginary sky overhead, and my paper roses about me, I drank in the quiet at my ears, as if they were thirsty. The little room was my bed-room. I afterwards made the two rooms change characters, when my wife lay in. Permission for her continuance with me at that period was easily obtained of the magistrates, among whom a new-comer made his appearance. This was another good-natured man, Lord Leslie, afterwards Earl of Rothes.* He heard me with kindness; and his actions did not belie his countenance. My eldest girl (now, alas! no more) was born in prison. She was beautiful, and for the greatest part of an existence of thirty years, she was happy. She was christened Mary after my mother, and Florimel after one of Spenser's heroines. But Mary we

* George William, twelfth earl of that name. He died a few years afterwards.

called her. Never shall I forget my sensations when she came into the world; for I was obliged to play the physician myself, the hour having taken us by surprise. But her mother found many unexpected comforts; and during the whole time of her confinement, which happened to be in very fine weather, the garden door was set open, and she looked upon trees and flowers. A thousand recollections rise within me at every fresh period of my imprisonment, such as I cannot trust myself with dwelling upon.

These rooms, and the visits of my friends, were the bright side of my captivity. I read verses without end, and wrote almost as many. I had also the pleasure of hearing that my brother had found comfortable rooms in Coldbath-fields, and a host who really deserved that name as much as a jailer could. The first year of my imprisonment was a long pull up-hill; but never was metaphor so literally verified, as by the sensation at the turning of the second. In the first year, all the prospect was that of the one coming: in the second, the days began to be scored off, like those of children at school preparing for a holiday. When I was fairly settled in my new apartments, the jailer could hardly give sufficient vent to his spleen at my having escaped his clutches, his astonishment was so great. Besides, though I treated him handsomely, he had a little lurking fear

of the *Examiner* upon him; so he contented himself with getting as much out of me as he could, and boasting of the grand room which he would fain have prevented my enjoying.

My friends were allowed to be with me till ten o'clock at night, when the under-turnkey, a young man with his lantern, and much ambitious gentility of deportment, came to see them out. I believe we scattered an urbanity about the prison, till then unknown. Even William Hazlitt, who there first did me the honour of a visit, would stand interchanging amenities at the threshold, which I had great difficulty in making him pass. I know not which kept his hat off with the greater pertinacity of deference, I to the diffident cutter-up of Tory dukes and kings, or he to the amazing prisoner and invalid who issued out of a bower of roses. There came my old friends and school-fellows, Pitman, whose wit and animal spirits still keep him alive; Mitchell, who translated Aristophanes; and Barnes, who always reminded me of Fielding. It was he that introduced me to the late Mr. Thomas Alsager, the kindest of neighbours, a man of business, who contrived to be a scholar and a musician. He loved his leisure, and yet would start up at a moment's notice to do the least of a prisoner's biddings.

My now old friend, Cowden Clarke, with his ever young and wise heart, was good enough to be his

own introducer, paving his way, like a proper investor of prisons, with baskets of fruit.

The Lambs came to comfort me in all weathers, hail or sunshine, in daylight and in darkness, even in the dreadful frost and snow of the beginning of 1814.

My physician, curiously enough, was Dr. Knighton (afterwards Sir William), who had lately become physician to the prince. He, therefore, could not, in decency, visit me under the circumstances, though he did again afterwards, never failing in the delicacies due either to his great friend or to his small. Meantime, another of his friends, the late estimable Dr. Gooch, came to me as his substitute, and he came often.

Great disappointment and exceeding viciousness may talk as they please of the badness of human nature. For my part, I am now in my sixty-fifth year, and I have seen a good deal of the world, the dark side as well as the light, and I say that human nature is a very good and kindly thing, and capable of all sorts of virtues. Art thou not a refutation of all that can be said against it, excellent Sir John Swinburne? another friend whom I made in prison, and who subsequently cheered some of my greatest passes of adversity.

To evils I have owed some of my greatest blessings. It was imprisonment that brought me ac-

quainted with my friend of friends, Shelley. I had seen little of him before; but he wrote to me, making me a princely offer, which at that time I stood in no need of.

Some other persons, not at all known to us, offered to raise money enough to pay the fine of 1,000*l.* We declined it, with proper thanks; and it became us to do so. But, as far as my own feelings were concerned, I have no merit; for I was destitute, at that time, of even a proper instinct with regard to money. It was not long afterwards that I was forced to call upon friendship for its assistance; and nobly (as I shall show by-and-by) was it afforded me!

To some other friends, near and dear, I may not even return thanks in this place for a thousand nameless attentions, which they make it a business of their existence to bestow on those they love. I might as soon thank my own heart. But one or two others, whom I have not seen for years, and who by some possibility (if, indeed, they ever think it worth their while to fancy anything on the subject) might suppose themselves forgotten, I may be suffered to remind of the pleasure they gave me. M. S., who afterwards saw us so often near London, has long, I hope, been enjoying the tranquillity he so richly deserved; and so, I trust, is C. S., whose face, or rather something like it (for it was not easy to

match her own), I continually met with afterwards in the land of her ancestors. Her veil, and her baskets of flowers, used to come through the portal, like light.

I must not omit the honour of a visit from the venerable Bentham, who was justly said to unite the wisdom of a sage with the simplicity of a child. He found me playing at battledore, in which he took a part, and, with his usual eye towards improvement, suggested an amendment in the constitution of shuttlecocks. I remember the surprise of the governor at his local knowledge and his vivacity. "Why, Mister," said he, "his eye is everywhere at once."

All these comforts were embittered by unceasing ill-health, and by certain melancholy reveries, which the nature of the place did not help to diminish. During the first six weeks, the sound of the felons' chains, mixed with what I took for horrid execrations or despairing laughter, was never out of my ears. When I went into the infirmary, which stood between the jail and the prison walls, gallowses were occasionally put in order by the side of my windows, and afterwards set up over the prison gates, where they remained visible. The keeper one day, with an air of mystery, took me into the upper ward, for the purpose, he said, of gratifying me with a view of the country from the roof. Some-

thing prevented his showing me this; but the spectacle he did show me I shall never forget. It was a stout country girl, sitting in an absorbed manner, her eyes fixed on the fire. She was handsome, and had a little hectic spot in either cheek, the effect of some gnawing emotion. He told me, in a whisper, that she was there for the murder of her bastard child. I could have knocked the fellow down for his unfeelingness in making a show of her; but, after all, she did not see us. She heeded us not. There was no object before her, but what produced the spot in her cheek. The gallows, on which she was executed, must have been brought out within her hearing;—but perhaps she heard that as little.

To relieve the reader's feelings, I will here give him another instance of the delicacy of my friend the under-jailer. He always used to carry up her food to this poor girl himself; because, as he said, he did not think it a fit task for younger men.

This was a melancholy case. In general, the crimes were not of such a staggering description, nor did the criminals appear to take their situation to heart. I found by degrees, that fortune showed fairer play than I had supposed to all classes of men, and that those who seemed to have most reason to be miserable, were not always so. Their criminality was generally proportioned to their want of thought. My friend Cave, who had become a philosopher by

the force of his situation, said to me one day, when a new batch of criminals came in, "Poor ignorant wretches, sir!" At evening, when they went to bed, I used to stand in the prison garden, listening to the cheerful songs with which the felons entertained one another. The beaters of hemp were a still merrier race. Doubtless the good hours and simple fare of the prison contributed to make the blood of its inmates run better, particularly those who were forced to take exercise. At last, I used to pity the debtors more than the criminals; yet even the debtors had their gay parties and jolly songs. Many a time (for they were my neighbours) have I heard them roar out the old ballad in Beaumont and Fletcher:—

> "He that drinks, and goes to bed sober,
> Falls as the leaves do, and dies in October."

To say the truth, there was an obstreperousness in their mirth, that looked more melancholy than the thoughtlessness of the lighter-feeding felons.

On the 3rd of February 1815, I was free. When my family, the preceding summer, had been obliged to go down to Brighton for their health, I felt ready to dash my head against the wall, at not being able to follow them. I would sometimes sit in my chair, with this thought upon me, till the agony of my impatience burst out at every pore. I would not speak

of it, if it did not enable me to show how this kind of suffering may be borne, and in what sort of way it terminates. I learnt to prevent it by violent exercise. All fits of nervousness ought to be anticipated as much as possible with exercise. Indeed, a proper healthy mode of life would save most people from these effeminate ills, and most likely cure even their inheritors.

It was now thought that I should dart out of my cage like a bird, and feel no end in the delight of ranging. But partly from ill-health, and partly from habit, the day of my liberation brought a good deal of pain with it. An illness of a long standing, which required very different treatment, had by this time been burnt in upon me by the iron that enters into the soul of the captive, wrap it in flowers as he may; and I am ashamed to say, that after stopping a little at the house of my friend Alsager, I had not the courage to continue looking at the shoals of people passing to and fro, as the coach drove up the Strand. The whole business of life seemed a hideous impertinence. The first pleasant sensation I experienced was when the coach turned into the New Road, and I beheld the old hills of my affection standing where they used to do, and breathing me a welcome.

It was very slowly that I recovered anything like a sensation of health. The bitterest evil I suffered

was in consequence of having been confined so long in one spot. The habit stuck to me on my return home, in a very extraordinary manner, and made, I fear, some of my friends think me ungrateful. They did me an injustice; but it was their fault; nor could I wish them the bitter experience which alone makes us acquainted with the existence of strange things. This weakness I outlived; but I have never thoroughly recovered the shock given my constitution. My natural spirits, however, have always struggled hard to see me reasonably treated. Many things give me exquisite pleasure, which seem to affect other men in a very minor degree; and I enjoyed, after all, such happy moments with my friends, even in prison, that in the midst of the beautiful climate which I afterwards visited, I was sometimes in doubt whether I would not rather have been in jail than in Italy.

CHAPTER XV.

FREE AGAIN.—SHELLEY IN ENGLAND.

Dignified neighbour and landlord.—Visits from Lord Byron and Mr. Wordsworth.—Infernal conduct of the angels in Paradise Lost.—*Return of hypochondria.—Descent of liberty.*—Story of Rimini.—*United States.—Visits to Lord Byron.—History of Shelley while in England.*

On leaving prison, I went to live in the Edgware-road, because my brother's house was in the neighbourhood. When we met, we rushed into each other's arms, and tears of manhood bedewed our cheeks.

Not that the idea of the Prince Regent had anything to do with such grave emotions. His Royal Highness continued to affect us with anything but solemnity, as we took care to make manifest in the *Examiner*. We had a hopeful and respectful word for every reigning prince, but himself; and I must say, that with the exception of the Emperor Alexander, not one of them deserved it.

The lodging which my family occupied (for the

fine, and the state of my health, delayed our resumption of a house) was next door to a wealthy old gentleman, who kept a handsome carriage, and spoke very bad grammar. My landlord, who was also a dignified personage after his fashion, pointed him out to me one day, as he was getting into this carriage; adding, in a tone amounting to the awful, "He is the greatest plumber in London." The same landlord, who had a splendid turn for anti-climax, and who had gifted his children with names proportionate to his paternal sense of what became him, called out to one of them from his parlour window, "You, sir, there—Maximilian—come out of the gutter." He was a good-natured sort of domineering individual; and would say to his wife, when he went out, "Damn it, my love, I insist on having the pudding."

In this house, Lord Byron continued the visits which he made me in prison. Unfortunately, I was too ill to return them. He pressed me very much to go to the theatre with him; but illness, and the dread of committing my critical independence, alike prevented me. His lordship was one of a management that governed Drury-lane Theatre at that time, and that were not successful. He got nothing by it, but petty vexations and a good deal of scandal.

Lord Byron's appearance at that time was the

finest I ever saw it. He was fatter than before his marriage, but only just enough so to complete the elegance of his person; and the turn of his head and countenance had a spirit and elevation in it, which, though not unmixed with disquiet, gave him altogether a very noble look. His dress, which was black, with white trousers, and which he wore buttoned close over the body, completed the succinctness and gentlemanliness of his appearance. I remember one day, as he stood looking out of the window, he resembled in a lively manner the portrait of him by Phillips, by far the best that has appeared; I mean the best of him at his best time of life, and the most like him in features as well as expression. He sat one morning so long, that Lady Byron sent up twice to let him know she was waiting. Her ladyship used to go on in the carriage to Henderson's nursery-ground, to get flowers. I had not the honour of knowing her, nor ever saw her but once, when I caught a glimpse of her at the door. I thought she had a pretty, earnest look, with her "pippin" face; an epithet by which she playfully designated herself.

I had a little study overlooking the fields to Westbourne,—a sequestered spot at that time embowered in trees. The study was draperied with white and green, having furniture to match; and as the noble poet had seen me during my imprisonment in a

bower of roses, he might here be said, with no great stretch of imagination, to have found me in a box of lilies. I mention this, because he took pleasure in the look of the little apartment. Also, because my wife's fair cousin, V. K. now, alas! no more, who was as good as she was intelligent, and as resolute as gentle, extinguished me there one morning when my dressing-gown had caught fire. She was all her life, indeed, taking painful tasks on herself, to save trouble to others.

In a room at the end of the garden to this house was a magnificent rocking-horse, which a friend had given my little boy; and Lord Byron, with a childish glee becoming a poet, would ride upon it. Ah! why did he ever ride his Pegasus to less advantage? Poets should never give up their privilege of surmounting sorrow with joy.

It was here also I had the honour of a visit from Mr. Wordsworth. He came to thank me for the zeal I had shewn in advocating the cause of his genius. I had the pleasure of shewing him his book on my shelves by the side of Milton; a sight which must have been the more agreeable, inasmuch as the visit was unexpected. He favoured me, in return, with giving his opinion of some of the poets his contemporaries, who would assuredly not have paid him a visit on the same grounds on which he was pleased to honour myself. Nor do I believe, that

from that day to this, he thought it becoming in him to reciprocate the least part of any benefit which a word in good season may have done for him. Lord Byron, in resentment for my having called him the "prince of the bards of his time," would not allow him to be even the "one-eyed monarch of the blind." He said he was the "blind monarch of the one-eyed." I must still differ with his lordship on that point; but I must own, that, after all which I have seen and read, posterity, in my opinion, will differ not a little with one person respecting the amount of merit to be ascribed to Mr. Wordsworth; though who that one person is, I shall leave the reader to discover.

Mr. Wordsworth, whom Mr. Hazlitt designated as one that would have had the wide circle of his humanities made still wider, and a good deal more pleasant, by dividing a little more of his time between his lakes in Westmoreland and the hotels of the metropolis, had a dignified manner, with a deep and roughish but not unpleasing voice, and an exalted mode of speaking. He had a habit of keeping his left hand in the bosom of his waistcoat; and in this attitude, except when he turned round to take one of the subjects of his criticism from the shelves (for his contemporaries were there also), he sat dealing forth his eloquent but hardly catholic judgments. In his "father's house," there were not "many mansions."

He was as sceptical on the merits of all kinds of poetry but one, as Richardson was on those of the novels of Fielding.

Under the study in which my visitor and I were sitting was an archway, leading to a nursery-ground; a cart happened to go through it while I was inquiring whether he would take any refreshment; and he uttered, in so lofty a voice, the words, "Anything which is *going forward*," that I felt inclined to ask him whether he would take a piece of the cart. Lamb would certainly have done it. But this was a levity which would neither have been so proper on my part, after so short an acquaintance, nor very intelligible perhaps, in any sense of the word, to the serious poet. There are good-humoured warrants for smiling, which lie deeper even than Mr. Wordsworth's thoughts for tears.

I did not see this distinguished person again till thirty years afterwards; when, I should venture to say, his manner was greatly superior to what it was in the former instance; indeed, quite natural and noble, with a cheerful air of animal as well as spiritual confidence; a gallant bearing, curiously reminding one of a certain illustrious duke, as I have seen him walking some dozen years ago by a lady's side, with no unbecoming oblivion of his time of life. I observed, also, that he no longer committed himself in scornful criticisms, or, indeed, in any criticisms

whatever, at least as far as I knew. He had found out that he could, at least, afford to be silent. Indeed, he spoke very little of anything. The conversation turned upon Milton, and I fancied I had opened a subject that would have "brought him out," by remarking, that the most diabolical thing in all *Paradise Lost* was a feeling attributed to the angels. "Ay!" said Mr. Wordsworth, and inquired what it was. I said it was the passage in which the angels, when they observed Satan journeying through the empyrean, let down a set of steps out of heaven, on purpose to add to his misery,—to his despair of ever being able to re-ascend them; they being angels in a state of bliss, and he a fallen spirit doomed to eternal punishment. The passage is as follows:—

"Each stair was meant mysteriously, nor stood
There always, but, drawn up to heaven, sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth sailing arriv'd
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, *or aggravate*
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss."

Mr. Wordsworth pondered, and said nothing. I thought to myself, what pity for the poor devil would not good uncle Toby have expressed! Into what indignation would not Burns have exploded! What

knowledge of themselves would not have been forced upon those same coxcombical and malignant angels by Fielding or Shakspeare!

Walter Scott said, that the eyes of Burns were the finest he ever saw. I cannot say the same of Mr. Wordsworth; that is, not in the sense of the beautiful, or even of the profound. But certainly I never beheld eyes that looked so inspired or supernatural. They were like fires half burning, half smouldering, with a sort of acrid fixture of regard, and seated at the further end of two caverns. One might imagine Ezekiel or Isaiah to have had such eyes.

It was for a good while after leaving prison that I was unable to return the visits of the friends who saw me there. Two years' confinement, and illness in combination, had acted so injuriously upon a sensitive temperament, that for many months I could not leave home without a morbid wish to return, and a fear of being seized with some fit or other in the streets, perhaps with sudden death; and this was one of the periods when my hypochondria came back. In company, however, or at the sight of a friend, animal spirits would struggle even with that; and few people, whatever ill-health I shewed in my face, had the slightest idea of what I suffered. When they thought I was simply jaundiced, I was puzzling myself with the cosmogony. When they fancied me wholly occupied in some conversation on a poem or a pot of

flowers, I would be haunted with the question respecting the origin of evil. What agonies, to be sure—what horrible struggles between wonder and patience—I suffered then! and into what a heaven of reliance and of gladness have I been since brought, by a little better knowledge of the tuning of the instruments of this existence, whether bodily or mental, taking right healthy spirits as the key-note, and harmonizing everything else with those! But I have treated this point already. Let me repeat my advice, however, to any one who may be suffering melancholy of the same sort, or of any sort, to take this recollection of mine to heart, and do his best to derive comfort from it. I thought I should die early, and in suffering; and here I am, thirty years afterwards, writing these words.

"For thilkè ground, that beareth the weed's wick,
Beareth also these wholesome herbs as oft;
And next to the foul nettle, rough and thick,
The rose ywaxeth sweet, and smooth, and soft;
And next the valley is the hill aloft;
And next the darky night is the glad morrow,
And also joy is next the fine of sorrow."

CHAUCER.

In the spring of the year 1816 I went to reside again in Hampstead, for the benefit of the air, and of my old field walks; and there I finished the *Story of Rimini*, which was forthwith published. I have spoken of a masque on the downfall of Napoleon,

called the *Descent of Liberty*, which I wrote while in prison. Liberty descends in it from heaven, to free the earth from the burthen of an evil magician. It was a compliment to the Allies, which they deserved well enough, inasmuch as it was a failure; otherwise they did not deserve it at all; for it was founded on a belief in promises which they never kept. There was a vein of something true in the *Descent of Liberty*, particularly in passages where the domestic affections were touched upon; but the poetry was too much on the surface. Fancy (encouraged by the allegorical nature of the masque) played her part too entirely in it at the expense of imagination. I had not yet got rid of the self-sufficiency caused by my editorial position, or by the credit, better deserved, which political courage had obtained for me. I had yet to learn in what the subtler spirit of poetry consisted.

Nor had I discovered it when I wrote the *Story of Rimini*. It was written in what, perhaps, at my time of life, and after the degree of poetical reputation which has been conceded me, I may be allowed, after the fashion of painters, to call my "first manner;" not the worst manner conceivable, though far from the best; as far from it (or at whatever greater distance modesty may require it to be put) as Dryden's *Flower and the Leaf*, from the story in Chaucer which Dryden imitated. I must take leave, however, to regard it as a true picture, painted after a certain

mode; and I can never forget the comfort I enjoyed in painting it, though I think I have since executed some things with a more inward perception of poetical requirement.

This poem, the greater part of which was written in prison, had been commenced a year or two before, while I was visiting the sea-coast at Hastings, with my wife and our first child. I was very happy; and looking among my books for some melancholy theme of verse, by which I could steady my felicity, I unfortunately chose the subject of Dante's famous episode. I did not consider, indeed at that time was not critically aware, that to enlarge upon a subject which had been treated with exquisite sufficiency, and to his immortal renown, by a great master, was not likely, by any merit of detail, to save a tyro in the art from the charge of presumption, especially one who had not yet even studied mastery itself, except in a subordinate shape. Dryden, at that time, in spite of my sense of Milton's superiority, and my early love of Spenser, was the most delightful name to me in English poetry. I had found in him more vigour, and music too, than in Pope, who had been my closest poetical acquaintance; and I could not rest till I had played on his instrument. I brought, however, to my task a sympathy with the tender and the pathetic, which I did not find in my master; and there was also an impulsive difference now and then in

the style, and a greater tendency to simplicity of words. My versification was not so vigorous as his. There were many weak lines in it. It succeeded best in catching the variety of his cadences; at least so far as they broke up the monotony of Pope. But I had a greater love for the beauties of external nature; I think also I partook of a more southern insight into the beauties of colour, of which I made abundant use in the procession which is described in the first canto; and if I invested my story with too many circumstances of description, especially on points not essential to its progress, and thus took leave *in toto* of the brevity, as well as the force of Dante, still the enjoyment which led me into the superfluity was manifest, and so far became its warrant. I had the pleasure of supplying my friendly critic, Lord Byron, with a point for his *Parisina* (the incident of the heroine talking in her sleep); of seeing all the reigning poets, without exception, break up their own heroic couplets into freer modulation (which they never afterwards abandoned); and of being paid for the resentment of the Tory critics in one single sentence from the lips of Mr. Rogers, who told me, when I met him for the first time at Lord Byron's house, that he had "just left a beautiful woman sitting over my poem in tears."

I was then between twenty and thirty: I am now between sixty and seventy; and I have just been

told by a friend, that he lately heard one of the most distinguished of living authoresses say she had shed "tears of vexation" on finding that I had re-cast the conclusion of the poem, and taken away so much of the first matter.

Let it be allowed me to boast of tears of this kind, and to say what balm they have given me for many a wound.

That re-casting of the poem was not a wise thing. The improvement which it received from the invigoration of weak lines, was injudiciously purchased by the change in the heroine's character, and the diminution of the pathos. I found I had not even attained the principal object of the alteration,—the real truth of the events on which the story was founded; and nobody welcomed the pains I had taken to obviate those charges of too attractive a sympathy with error, which had surprised me when the poem first appeared, and which the "tears of vexation" in the eyes of a morality the most received would alone have sufficed to nullify. The danger of the time, indeed the danger of all times, is, not too great a sympathy with error, but ignorance of the first causes of error.

I need hardly advert, at the present time of day, to the objections of this kind, or of any kind, which were made to the poem, when it first appeared, by the wrath of the Tory critics. In fact, it would

have met with no such hostility, or indeed any hostility at all, if politics had not judged it. Critics might have differed about it, of course, and reasonably have found fault; but had it emanated from the circles, or been written by any person not obnoxious to political objection, I believe there is nobody at this time of day, who will not allow, that the criticism in all quarters would have been very goodnatured, and willing to hail whatever merit it possessed. I may therefore be warranted in having spoken of it without any greater allusion to quarrels which have long been over, and to which I have confessed that I gave the first cause of provocation.

In a new edition of the poem, which is meditated, I propose to retain the improvement in its versification, while I restore the narrative to its first course. With its historical truth, or otherwise, I shall no longer trouble myself; and I shall request the readers, if they can, to dismiss Dante from their minds, and to consider the story as a fiction having as little in common with his ferocity as with his sublimity;—a design altogether different in its pretensions;—a picture, by an immature hand, of sunny luxuriance overclouded; not of a cloud, no less brief than beautiful, crossing the gulfs of Tartarus. Those who, after having seen lightning, will tolerate no other effect of light, have a right to say so, and may have the highest critical reason on their side;

but those who will do otherwise, have perhaps more; for they can enjoy lightning, and a bask in the sunshine too.

The *Story of Rimini* had not long appeared, when I received a copy of it, which looked like witchcraft. It was the identical poem, in type and appearance, bound in calf, and sent me without any explanation; but it was a little smaller. I turned it over a dozen times, wondering what it could be, and how it could have originated. The simple solution of the puzzle I did not consider, till I had summoned other persons to partake my astonishment. At length we consulted the title-page, and there saw the names of "Wells and Lilly, Boston; and M. Carey, Philadelphia." — I thought how the sight would have pleased my father and mother. A few years ago I received a copy of another Boston edition, preceded by the like piracy of another poem, the publisher of which was so good as to say, that he had heard of a new one from my pen, which he should be very happy to print also, if I would send it him. Not a syllable did he add about the happiness of disbursing a doit for the permission. How many poems of mine, or editions of poems, or editions of prose-writings, have appeared in America, before or since, I cannot say; but I believe the booksellers there have republished everything which I have written; and I confess I cannot but be sensible even of the

shabby honour thus done me, and heartily glad of every genial hand into which my productions may be carried in consequence: but I should like to know, what an American publisher would say, if some English traveller were to help himself to the fruits of his labour out of the till, and make off with them on board ship. Being a cousin-germane of the Americans, I am very popular in their country, and receive from them every compliment imaginable, except a farthing's payment. How came my mother to be born in such a country? I love the women there for her sake, especially the Philadelphia women; I respect, also, every American that differs with his bookseller; and I hold in due favour their Bryants, their Emersons, their Lovells, and their ambassadors. But I wish I could get rid of the impression which I have before mentioned; to wit, that one great shop-counter extends all down their coast from Massachusetts to Mexico. Why do they not get a royal court or two among them, and thus learn that there is something else in the world besides huffing and money-getting? To be slave-holding in the south, payment-shirking in the north, and arrogant everywhere, is not to "go a-head" of the nations, but to fall back into the times of colonial Dutchmen. Money-getting republics may be the millennium of the mercantile; but they are neither the desires of human nature, nor of merchants them-

selves when they come to be lords *in posse*. The world, before it be satisfied with its governmental arrangements, must settle itself into something very different, either from feudality's men of iron, or Sydney Smith's "men of drab."

I now returned the visits which Lord Byron had made me in prison. His wife's separation from him had just taken place, and he had become ill himself; his face was jaundiced with bile; he felt the attacks of the public severely; and, to crown all, he had an execution in his house. I was struck with the real trouble he manifested, compared with what the public thought of it. The adherence of his old friends was also touching. I saw Mr. Hobhouse (Sir John) and Mr. Scrope Davies (college friends of his) almost every time I called. Mr. Rogers was regular in his daily visits; and Lord Holland, he told me, was very kind.

Lord Byron, at this juncture, took the blame of the quarrel upon himself. He even enlisted the self-love of his new visitor so far on the lady's side, as to tell him "that she liked my poem, and had compared his temper to that of Giovanni, the heroine's consort."* He also showed me a letter which

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* "The worst of Prince Giovanni, as his bride
Too quickly found, was an ill-temper'd pride.
Bold, handsome, able (if he chose) to please,—
Punctual and right in common offices,

she had written him after her departure from the house, and when she was on her way to the relations who persuaded her not to return. It was signed

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He lost the sight of conduct's only worth,
The scattering smiles on this uneasy earth;
And, on the strength of virtues of small weight,
Claim'd tow'rds himself the exercise of great.
He kept no reckoning with his sweets and sours;
He'd hold a sullen countenance for hours
And then, if pleas'd to cheer himself a space,
Look for the immediate rapture in your face,
And wonder that a cloud could still be there,
How small soever, when his own was fair.
Yet such is conscience,—so design'd to keep
Stern, central watch, though all things else may sleep,
And so much knowledge of one's self there lies
Cored, after all, in self-complacencies,
That no suspicion would have touch'd him more
Than that of wanting on the generous score:
He would have whelm'd you with a weight of scorn,—
Been proud at eve, inflexible at morn,—
In short, ill-temper'd for a week to come,
And all to strike that desperate error dumb.
Taste had he, in a word, for high-turn'd merit,
But not the patience, nor the genial spirit:
And so he made, 'twixt virtue and defect,
A sort of fierce demand on your respect,
Which, if assisted by his high degree,
It gave him in some eyes a dignity,
And struck a meaner deference in the many,
Left him, at last, unloveable with any."

Giovanni, however, would not have had the candour to refer to any such description of himself as this; neither had he any of the wit and pleasantry of my noble friend.

with the epithet before mentioned; and was written in a spirit of good-humour, and even of fondness, which, though containing nothing but what a wife ought to write, and is the better for writing, was, I thought, almost too good to show. But a certain over-communicativeness was one of those qualities of his lordship, which equally became the child-like simplicity of a poet, and startled you in proportion as it led to disclosures of questionable propriety.

I thought I understood the circumstances of this separation at the time, and still better some time afterwards; but I have since been convinced, and the conviction grows stronger every day, that no domestic dispute, even if it were desirable or proper to investigate it, can ever be thoroughly understood unless you hear both parties, and know their entire relative situations, together with the interests and passions of those about them. You must also be sure of their statements; and see whether the statements on all sides themselves are prejudiced or the reverse. Indeed you cannot know individuals themselves truly, unless you have lived with them; at all events, unless you have studied them long enough to know whether appearances are realities; and although you may, and to a certain degree must, draw your own conclusions respecting people from statements which they give to the world, whether for or against themselves, yet it is safer, as

well as pleasanter, to leave that question as much as possible in the place where it ought ever to have abided, unless brought forward on the highest and noblest grounds; namely, in the silence of the heart that has most suffered under its causes.

I shall, therefore, say nothing more of a business which nobody ought to have heard of. Lord Byron soon afterwards left England, and I did not see him again, or hear from him, scarcely of him, till he proposed my joining him in Italy. I take my leave of him, therefore, till that period, and proceed to speak of the friends with whom I became intimate in the mean while—Shelley and Keats.

I first saw Shelley during the early period of the *Examiner*, before its indictment on account of the Regent; but it was only for a few short visits, which did not produce intimacy. He was then a youth, not come to his full growth; very gentlemanly, earnestly gazing at every object that interested him, and quoting the Greek dramatists. Not long afterwards he married his first wife; and he subsequently wrote to me while I was in prison, as I have before mentioned. I renewed the correspondence a year or two afterwards, during which period one of the earliest as well as most beautiful of his lyric poems, the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, had appeared in the *Examiner*. Meantime, he and his wife had parted; and now he re-appeared before me at Hampstead, in

consequence of the calamity which I am about to mention.

But this circumstance it will be proper to introduce with some remarks, and a little previous biography.

It is hardly necessary to inform the reader at this present day, that Percy Bysshe Shelley was the eldest son of Sir Timothy Shelley, Bart., of Castle-Goring, in Sussex. He was born at Field-Place, in that county, the 4th of August 1792.

It is difficult, under any circumstances, to speak with proper delicacy of the living connections of the dead; but it is no violation of decorum to observe, that the family connections of Mr. Shelley belonged to a small party in the House of Commons, itself belonging to another party. They were Whig Aristocrats, voting in the interest of the Duke of Norfolk. To a man of genius, endowed with a metaphysical acuteness to discern truth and falsehood, and a strong sensibility to give way to his sense of it, such an origin, however respectable in the ordinary point of view, was not the very luckiest that could have happened for the purpose of keeping him within ordinary bounds. With what feelings is Truth to open its eyes upon this world among the most respectable of our mere party gentry? Among licensed contradictions of all sorts? among the Christian doctrines and the worldly practices? Among

fox-hunters and their chaplains? among beneficed loungers, rakish old gentlemen, and more startling young ones, who are old in the folly of *knowingness?* people not, indeed, bad in themselves; not so bad as their wholesale and unthinking decriers, much less their hypocritical decriers; many excellent by nature, but spoilt by those professed demands of what is right and noble, and those inculcations, at the same time, of what is false and wrong, which have been so admirably exposed by a late philosopher (Bentham), and which he has fortunately helped some of our best living statesmen to leave out of the catalogue of their ambitions.

Shelley began to think at a very early age, and to think, too, of these anomalies. He saw that at every step in life some compromise was expected between a truth which he was told not to violate, and a colouring and double-meaning of it which forced him upon the violation.

Doubtless there are numbers of young men who discern nothing of all this; who are, comparatively, even unspoilt by it; and who become respectable tellers of truth in its despite. These are the honourable part of the orthodox; good-natured fathers and husbands, conscientious though not very inquiring clergymen, respectable men in various walks of life, who, thinking they abide by the ideas that have been set before them, really have very few ideas of anything, and

are only remarkable for affording specimens of every sort of commonplace, comfortable or unhappy. On the other hand, numbers of young men get a sense of this confusion of principles, if not with a direct and logical consciousness, yet with an instinct for turning it to account. Even some of these, by dint of a genial nature, and upon the same principle on which a heathen priest would eschew the vices of his mythology, turn out decent members of society. But how many others are spoilt for ever! How many victims to this confusion of truth and falsehood, apparently flourishing, but really callous or unhappy, are to be found in all quarters of the community; men who profess opinions which contradict their whole lives; takers of oaths, which they dispense with the very thought of; subscribers to articles which they doubt, or even despise: triflers with their hourly word for gain; statesmen of mere worldliness; ready hirelings of power; sneering disbelievers in good; teachers to their own children of what has spoilt themselves, and has rendered their existence a dull and selfish mockery.

Whenever a character like Shelley's appears in society, it must be considered with reference to these abuses. Others may consent to be spoilt by them, and to see their fellow-creatures spoilt. He was a looker-on of a different nature.

With this jumble, then, of truth and falsehood in

his head, and a genius born to detect it, though perhaps never quite able to rid itself of the injury (for if ever he deviated into an error unworthy of him, it was in occasionally condescending, though for the kindest purposes, to use a little double-dealing), Shelley was sent to Eton, and afterwards to the University of Oxford. At Eton, a Reviewer recollected him setting trees on fire with a burning-glass; a proceeding which the critic set down to his natural taste for destruction. Perhaps the same Reviewer (if we are not mistaken as to the person) would now, by the help of his own riper faculties, attribute it to the natural curiosity of genius. At the same school, the young reformer rose up in opposition to the system of fagging. Against this custom he formed a conspiracy; and for a time he made it pause, at least as far as his own person was concerned. His feelings at this period of his life are touchingly and powerfully described in the dedication of the *Revolt of Islam*.

"Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear friend, when first
The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.
I do remember well the hour which burst
My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-day it was,
When I walk'd forth upon the glittering grass,
And wept, I knew not why, until there rose
From the near schoolroom, voices, that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes—
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

"And then I clasp'd my hands, and look'd around,—
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
Which pour'd their warm drops on the sunny ground:
So without shame I spake: 'I will be wise,
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
Such power; for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannize
Without reproach or check.' I then controll'd
My tears; my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold.

"And from that hour did I, with earnest thought,
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore;
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn; but from that secret store
Wrought linkèd armour for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind."

Shelley, I believe, was taken from Eton before the regular period for leaving school. His unconventional spirit—penetrating, sincere, and demanding the reason and justice of things—was found to be inconvenient. At Oxford it was worse. Logic was there put into his hands; and he used it in the most uncompromising manner. The more important the proposition, the more he thought himself bound to investigate it: the greater the demand upon his assent, the less, upon their own principle of reasoning, he thought himself bound to grant it: for the university, by its ordinances, invited scholars to ask questions which they found themselves unable to answer. Shelley did so; and the answer was expulsion. It is true, the question he asked was a very

hard one. It was upon the existence of God. But could neither Faith, Hope, nor Charity find a better answer than that? and in the teeth, too, of their own challenge to inquiry? Could not some gentle and loving nature have been found to speak to him in private, and beg him at least to consider and pause over the question, for reasons which would have had their corresponding effect? The Church of England has been a blessing to mankind, inasmuch as it has discountenanced the worst superstitions, and given sense and improvement leave to grow; but if it cannot learn still further to sacrifice letter to spirit, and see the danger of closing its lips on the greatest occasions and then proceeding to open them on the smallest, and dispute with its very self on points the most "frivolous and vexatious," it will do itself an injury it little dreams of with the new and constantly growing intelligence of the masses; who are looking forward to the noblest version of Christianity, while their teachers are thus fighting about the meanest.

Conceive a young man of Mr. Shelley's character, with no better experience of the kindness and sincerity of those whom he had perplexed, thus thrown forth into society, to form his own judgments, and pursue his own career. It was *Emilius out in the World,* but formed by his own tutorship. There is a novel, under that title, written by the German La Fontaine, which has often reminded me of him. The

hero of another, by the same author, called the *Reprobate*, still more resembles him. His way of proceeding was entirely after the fashion of those guileless, but vehement hearts, which not being well replied to by their teachers, and finding them hostile to inquiry, add to a natural love of truth all the passionate ardour of a generous and devoted protection of it. Shelley had met with Godwin's *Political Justice;* and he seemed to breathe, for the first time, in an open and bright atmosphere. He resolved to square all his actions by what he conceived to be the strictest justice, without any consideration for the opinions of those whose little exercise of that virtue towards himself ill-fitted them, he thought, for better teachers, and as ill warranted him in deferring to the opinions of the world whom they guided. That he did some extraordinary things in consequence, is admitted: that he did many noble ones, and all with sincerity, is well known to his friends, and will be admitted by all sincere persons. Let those who are so fond of exposing their own natures, by attributing every departure from ordinary conduct to bad motives, ask themselves what conduct could be more extraordinary in their eyes, and at the same time less attributable to a bad motive, than the rejection of an estate for the love of a principle. Yet Shelley rejected one. He had only to become a

yea and nay man in the House of Commons, to be one of the richest men in Sussex. He declined it, and lived upon a comparative pittance. Even the fortune that he would ultimately have inherited, as secured to his person, was petty in the comparison.

I will relate another anecdote, which the uncharitable will not find it so difficult to quarrel with. It trenches upon that extraordinary privilege to indulge one sex at the expense of the other, which they guard with so jealous a care, and so many beggings of the question. The question, I grant, is weighty. Far am I from saying that it is here settled; but very far are they themselves from having settled it; as their own writings and statistics, their own morals, romances, tears, and even comedies testify. The case, I understood, was this; for I am bound to declare that I forget who told it me; and I never asked Shelley whether it was true. But it is quite in character, and not likely to have been invented. Shelley was present at a ball, where he was a person of some importance. Numerous village ladies were there, old and young; and none of the passions were absent that are accustomed to glance in the eyes, and gossip in the tongues, of similar gatherings together of talk and dress. In the front were seated the rank and fashion of the place. The virtues diminished, as the seats went backward; and at the back of all, unspoken to, but not unheeded,

sat blushing a damsel who had been seduced. It is not stated by whom; probably by some well-dressed gentleman in the room, who thought himself entitled, nevertheless, to the conversation of the most flourishing ladies present, and who naturally thought so, because he had it. That sort of thing happens every day. It was expected that the young squire would take out one of these ladies to dance. What is the consternation, when they see him making his way to the back benches, and handing forth, with an air of consolation and tenderness, the object of all the virtuous scorn of the room! the person whom that other gentleman, wrong as he had been towards her, and "wicked" as the ladies might have allowed him to be towards the fair sex in general, would have shrunk from touching!—The young reformer, it was found, was equally unfit for school tyrannies, for university inconsistencies, and for the chaste orthodoxy of squires' tables. So he went up to town.

Had he now behaved himself pardonably in the eyes of the conventional in those days (for it is wonderful in how short a time honest discussion may be advanced by a court at once correct and unbigoted, and a succession of calmly progressing ministries; and all classes are now beginning to suffer the wisdom of every species of abuse to be doubted), Shelley would have gone to London with the resolution of sowing his wild oats, and becoming a decent

member of society; that is to say, he would have seduced a few maid-servants, or at least haunted the lobbies, and then bestowed the remnant of his constitution upon some young lady of his own rank in life, and settled into a proper church-and-king man of the old leaven, perhaps a member of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. This used to be the proper routine, and gave one a right to be didactic. Alas! Shelley did not do so; and bitterly had he to repent, not that he did not do it, but that he married while yet a stripling, and that the wife whom he took was not of a nature to appreciate his understanding, or, perhaps, to come from contact with it uninjured in what she had of her own. They separated by mutual consent, after the birth of two children. To this measure his enemies would hardly have demurred; especially as the marriage was disapproved by the husband's family, and the lady was of inferior rank. It might have been regarded even as something like making amends. But to one thing they would strongly have objected. He proceeded, in the spirit of Milton's doctrines, to pay his court to another lady. I wish I could pursue the story in the same tone; but now came the greatest pang of his life. He was residing at Bath, when news came to him that his wife had destroyed herself. It was a heavy blow to him; and he never forgot it. For a time, it tore his being to pieces; nor is there a doubt, that,

however deeply he was accustomed to reason on the nature and causes of evil, and on the steps necessary to be taken for opposing it, he was not without remorse for having no better exercised his judgment with regard to the degree of intellect he had allied himself with, and for having given rise to a premature independence of conduct in one unequal to the task. The lady was greatly to be pitied; so was the survivor. Let the collegiate refusers of argument, and the conventional sowers of their wild oats, with myriads of unhappy women behind them, rise up in judgment against him! Honester men will not be hindered from doing justice to sincerity wherever they find it; nor be induced to blast the memory of a man of genius and benevolence, for one painful passage in his life, which he might have avoided, had he been no better than his calumniators.

On the death of this unfortunate lady, Shelley married the daughter of Mr. Godwin, and resided at Great Marlow in Buckinghamshire, where my family and myself paid him a visit, and where he was a blessing to the poor. His charity, though liberal, was not weak. He inquired personally into the circumstances of his petitioners; visited the sick in their beds (for he had gone the round of the hospitals on purpose to be able to practise on occasion), and kept a regular list of industrious poor, whom he assisted with small sums to make up their accounts.

Here he wrote the *Revolt of Islam*, and *A Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote through the Country*. He offered to give a tenth part of his income for a year towards the advancement of the project. He used to sit in a study adorned with casts, as large as life, of the Vatican Apollo and the celestial Venus. Between whiles he would walk in the garden, or take strolls about the country, or a sail in a boat, a diversion of which he was passionately fond. Flowers, or the sight of a happy face, or the hearing of a congenial remark, would make his eyes sparkle with delight. At other times he would suddenly droop into an aspect of dejection, particularly when a wretched face passed him, or when he saw the miserable-looking children of a lace-making village near him, or when he thought of his own children, of whom he had been deprived by the Court of Chancery. He once said to me during a walk in the Strand, "Look at all these worn and miserable faces that pass us, and tell me what is to be thought of the world they appear in?" I said, "Ah, but these faces are not all worn with grief. You must take the wear and tear of pleasure into the account; of secret joys as well as sorrows; of merry-makings, and sittings-up at night." He owned that there was truth in the remark. This was the sort of consolation which I was in the habit of giving him, and for which he was thankful, because I was sincere.

As to his children, the reader perhaps is not aware, that in this country of England, so justly called free on many accounts, and so proud of its "Englishman's castle,"—of the house, which nothing can violate,—a man's offspring can be taken from him to-morrow, who holds a different opinion from the Lord Chancellor in faith and morals. Hume's, if he had any, might have been taken. Gibbon's might have been taken. The virtuous Condorcet, if he had been an Englishman and a father, would have stood no chance. Plato, for his *Republic*, would have stood as little; and Mademoiselle de Gournay might have been torn from the arms of her adopted father Montaigne, convicted beyond redemption of seeing farther than the walls of the Court of Chancery. That such things are not done often, I believe: that they may be done oftener than people suspect, I believe also; for they are transacted with closed doors, and the details are forbidden to transpire.

Queen Mab, Shelley's earliest poetical production, written before he was out of his teens, and regretted by him as a crude production, was published without his consent. Yet he was convicted from it of holding the opinion which his teachers at the University had not thought fit to reason him out of. He was also charged with not being of the received opinions with regard to the intercourse of the sexes; and his children,

a girl and boy, were taken from him. They were transferred to the care of a clergyman of the Church of England. The circumstance deeply affected Shelley: so much so, that he never afterwards dared to trust himself with mentioning their names in my hearing, though I had stood at his side throughout the business; probably for that reason.* Shelley's manner of life suffered greatly in its repute from this circumstance. He was said to be keeping a seraglio at Marlow; and his friends partook of the scandal. This keeper of a seraglio, who, in fact, was extremely difficult to please in such matters, and who had no idea of love unconnected with sentiment, passed his days like a hermit. He rose early in the morning, walked and read before breakfast, took that meal sparingly, wrote and studied the greater part of the morning, walked and read again, dined on vegetables (for he took neither meat nor wine), conversed

* The boy is since dead; and Shelley's son by his second wife, the daughter of Godwin, has succeeded to the baronetcy. It seldom falls to the lot of a son to have illustrious descent so heaped upon him; his mother a woman of talents, his father a man of genius, his grandfather, Godwin, a writer secure of immortality; his grandmother, Godwin's wife, the celebrated Mary Wollstonecraft: and on the side of his father's ancestors he partakes of the blood of the intellectual as well as patrician family of the Sackvilles. But, what is most of all, his own intelligent and liberal nature makes him worthy of all this lustre.

with his friends (to whom his house was ever open), again walked out, and usually finished with reading to his wife till ten o'clock, when he went to bed. This was his daily existence. His book was generally Plato, or Homer, or one of the Greek tragedians, or the Bible, in which last he took a great, though peculiar, and often admiring interest. One of his favourite parts was the book of Job. The writings attributed to Solomon he thought too Epicurean, in the modern sense of the word; and in his notions of St. Paul, he agreed with the writer of the work entitled *Not Paul but Jesus*. For his Christianity, in the proper sense of the word, he went to the gospel of St. James, and to the Sermon on the Mount by Christ himself, for whose truly divine spirit he entertained the greatest reverence. There was nothing which embittered his enemies against him more than the knowledge of this fact. His want of faith, indeed, in the letter, and his exceeding faith in the spirit, of Christianity, formed a comment, the one on the other, very formidable to those who choose to forget what scripture itself observes on that point.*

As an instance of Shelley's extraordinary generosity, a friend of his, a man of letters, enjoyed from him at that period a pension of a hundred a year, though he had but a thousand of his own; and he

* "For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

continued to enjoy it till fortune rendered it superfluous. But the princeliness of his disposition was seen most in his behaviour to another friend, the writer of this memoir, who is proud to relate, that with money raised by an effort, Shelley once made him a present of fourteen hundred pounds, to extricate him from debt. I was not extricated, for I had not yet learned to be careful: but the shame of not being so, after such generosity, and the pain which my friend afterwards underwent when I was in trouble and he was helpless, were the first causes of my thinking of money-matters to any purpose. His last sixpence was ever at my service, had I chosen to share it. In a poetical epistle written some years afterwards, and published in the volume of *Posthumous Poems*, Shelley, in alluding to his friend's circumstances, which for the second time were then straitened, only made an affectionate lamentation that he himself was poor; never once hinting that he had already drained his purse for his friend.

To return to Hampstead.—Shelley often came there to see me, sometimes to stop for several days. He delighted in the natural broken ground, and in the fresh air of the place, especially when the wind set in from the north-west, which used to give him an intoxication of animal spirits. Here also he swam his paper boats on the ponds, and delighted to play with my children, particularly with my eldest boy,

the seriousness of whose imagination, and his susceptibility of a "grim" impression (a favourite epithet of Shelley's), highly interested him. He would play at "frightful creatures" with him, from which the other would snatch "a fearful joy," only begging him occasionally "not to do the horn," which was a way that Shelley had of screwing up his hair in front, to imitate a weapon of that sort. This was the boy (now a man of forty, and himself a fine writer) to whom Lamb took such a liking on similar accounts, and addressed some charming verses as his "favourite child." I have already mentioned him during my imprisonment.

As an instance of Shelley's playfulness when he was in good spirits, he was once going to town with me in the Hampstead stage, when our only companion was an old lady, who sat silent and still after the English fashion. Shelley was fond of quoting a passage from *Richard the Second*, in the commencement of which the king, in the indulgence of his misery, exclaims—

> "For Heaven's sake, let us sit upon the ground,
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings.

Shelley, who had been moved into the ebullition by something objectionable which he thought he saw in the face of our companion, startled her into a look of the most ludicrous astonishment, by suddenly calling this passage to mind, and in his enthusiastic

tone of voice, addressing me by name with the first two lines. "Hunt!" he exclaimed,—

> "For Heaven's sake, let us sit upon the ground,
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings."

The old lady looked on the coach-floor, as if expecting to see us take our seats accordingly.

But here follows a graver and more characteristic anecdote. Shelley was not only anxious for the good of mankind in general. We have seen what he proposed on the subject of Reform in Parliament, and he was always very desirous of the national welfare. It was a moot point when he entered your room, whether he would begin with some half-pleasant, half-pensive joke, or quote something Greek, or ask some question about public affairs. He once came upon me at Hampstead, when I had not seen him for some time; and after grasping my hands into both his, in his usual fervent manner, he sat down, and looked at me very earnestly, with a deep, though not melancholy, interest in his face. We were sitting with our knees to the fire, to which we had been getting nearer and nearer, in the comfort of finding ourselves together. The pleasure of seeing him was my only feeling at the moment; and the air of domesticity about us was so complete, that I thought he was going to speak of some family matter, either his or my own, when he asked me, at the close of an

intensity of pause, what was "the amount of the National Debt."

I used to rally him on the apparent inconsequentiality of his manner upon those occasions, and he was always ready to carry on the jest, because he said that my laughter did not hinder my being in earnest.

But here follows a crowning anecdote, into which I shall close my recollections of him at this period. We shall meet him again in Italy, and there, alas! I shall have to relate events graver still.

I was returning home one night to Hampstead after the opera. As I approached the door, I heard strange and alarming shrieks, mixed with the voice of a man. The next day, it was reported by the gossips that Mr. Shelley, no Christian (for it was he who was there), had brought some "very strange female" into the house, no better, of course, than she ought to be. The real Christian had puzzled them. Shelley, in coming to our house that night, had found a woman lying near the top of the hill, in fits. It was a fierce winter night, with snow upon the ground; and winter loses nothing of its fierceness at Hampstead. My friend, always the promptest as well as most pitying on these occasions, knocked at the first houses he could reach, in order to have the woman taken in. The invariable answer was, that they could not do it. He asked for an outhouse to put

her in, while he went for a doctor. Impossible! In vain he assured them she was no impostor. They would not dispute the point with him; but doors were closed, and windows were shut down. Had he lit upon worthy Mr. Park, the philologist, he would assuredly have come, in spite of his Calvinism. But he lived too far off. Had he lit upon my friend, Armitage Brown, who lived on another side of the heath; or on his friend and neighbour, Dilke; they would, either of them, have jumped up from amidst their books or their bed-clothes, and have gone out with him. But the paucity of Christians is astonishing, considering the number of them. Time flies; the poor woman is in convulsions; her son, a young man, lamenting over her. At last my friend sees a carriage driving up to a house at a little distance. The knock is given; the warm door opens; servants and lights pour forth. Now, thought he, is the time. He puts on his best address, which anybody might recognise for that of the highest gentleman as well as of an interesting individual, and plants himself in the way of an elderly person, who is stepping out of the carriage with his family. He tells his story. They only press on the faster. "Will you go and see her?" "No, sir; there's no necessity for that sort of thing, depend on it. Impostors swarm everywhere: the thing cannot be done; sir, your conduct is extraordinary." "Sir,"

cried Shelley, assuming a very different manner, and forcing the flourishing householder to stop out of astonishment, "I am sorry to say that *your* conduct is *not* extraordinary; and if my own seems to amaze you, I will tell you something which may amaze you a little more, and I hope will frighten you. It is such men as you who madden the spirits and the patience of the poor and wretched; and if ever a convulsion comes in this country (which is very probable), recollect what I tell you:—you will have your house, that you refuse to put the miserable woman into, burnt over your head." "God bless me, sir! Dear me, sir!" exclaimed the poor frightened man, and fluttered into his mansion. The woman was then brought to our house, which was at some distance, and down a bleak path; and Shelley and her son were obliged to hold her till the doctor could arrive. It appeared that she had been attending this son in London, on a criminal charge made against him, the agitation of which had thrown her into the fits on her return. The doctor said that she would have perished, had she lain there a short time longer. The next day my friend sent mother and son comfortably home to Hendon, where they were known, and whence they returned him thanks full of gratitude.

CHAPTER XVI.

KEATS, LAMB, AND COLERIDGE.

Charles Cowden Clarke. — Keats and Shelley. — Mr. Monckton Milnes's Letters and Remains of Keats.—"Other-worldliness."—Armitage Brown.—Keats and Lamb. — Wordsworth on Shakspeare.—Milton dining.—Keats and Byron.—Keats in Italy.—His death and personal appearance.—"Foliage."—The Indicator. *—Tasso's* Aminta.—*Foolish ignorance of business.—Mr. Lockhart. —Personal appearance of Lamb.—Character of his genius.—His bon-mots and imaginarg notices of his friends.—Person of Coleridge.—Character of his genius.—Coleridge and Hazlitt.—Coleridge's conversation and daily habits.*

And now to speak of Keats, who was introduced to me by his schoolmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke, a man of a most genial nature, and corresponding poetical taste, admirably well qualified to nourish the genius of his pupil.

I had not known the young poet long, when Shelley and he became acquainted under my roof. Keats did not take to Shelley as kindly as Shelley did to him. Shelley's only thoughts of his new acquaintance were such as regarded his bad health, with which he sympathized, and his poetry, of

which he has left such a monument of his admiration in *Adonais*. Keats, being a little too sensitive on the score of his origin, felt inclined to see in every man of birth a sort of natural enemy. Their styles in writing also were very different; and Keats, notwithstanding his unbounded sympathies with ordinary flesh and blood, and even the transcendental cosmopolitics of *Hyperion*, was so far inferior in universality to his great acquaintance, that he could not accompany him in his dædal rounds with nature, and his Archimedean endeavours to move the globe with his own hands. I am bound to state thus much; because, hopeless of recovering his health, under circumstances that made the feeling extremely bitter, an irritable morbidity appears even to have driven his suspicions to excess; and this not only with regard to the acquaintance whom he might reasonably suppose to have had some advantages over him, but to myself, who had none; for I learned the other day, with extreme pain, such as I am sure so kind and reflecting a man as Mr. Monckton Milnes would not have inflicted on me could he have foreseen it, that Keats at one period of his intercourse with us suspected both Shelley and myself of a wish to see him undervalued! Such are the tricks which constant infelicity can play with the most noble natures. For Shelley let *Adonais* answer. For myself, let every word answer which I uttered about

him, living and dead, and such as I now proceed to repeat. I might as well have been told, that I wished to see the flowers or the stars undervalued, or my own heart that loved him.

But it was sickness, and passed away. It appears, by Mr. Milnes's book, that all his friends dissatisfied him in the course of those trials of his temper; and my friend, Mr. Milnes (for that distinguished person honours me with his friendship, and can afford the objection), will allow me to say, that those Letters and Remains of the young poet were not among his happiest effusions, nor wanting to supply a certain force of character to his memory. That memory possessed force enough already for those who were qualified to discern it; and those who were not, hardly deserved to have their own notions of energy flattered at the poet's expense. He was already known to have personally chastised a blackguard, and to have been the author of *Hyperion;*

"That large utterance of the early gods."

What more could have been necessary to balance the trembling excess of sensibility in his earlier poems? The world has few enough incarnations of poets themselves in Arcadian shapes, to render necessary any deterioration of such as it has the luck to possess.

But perhaps my own personal feelings induce me

to carry this matter too far. In the publication alluded to is a contemptuous reference (not by Mr. Milnes) to a paper in the *Examiner* on the season of Christmas. I turned to it with new feelings of anxiety; and there, besides finding no warrant for such reference (unless a certain tone of self-complacency, so often regretted in this autobiography, can have justified it), I had the good fortune to be compensated with discovering a phrase, which reminded me of one of the most consolatory passages of my life. I hope I am not giving fresh instance of a weakness which I suppose myself to have outgrown; much less appropriating an invention which does not belong to me; but an accomplished authoress one day (Mrs. Jameson), at the table of my friend Barry Cornwall, quoted the term "other-worldliness" from Coleridge. I said Coleridge was rich enough not to need the transference to him of other men's property; and that I felt so much honoured by the supposition in this instance, that I could not help claiming the word as my own. If Coleridge, indeed, used it before me, I can only say that I was not aware of it, and that my own reflections, very much accustomed to that side of speculation, would have suggested an identical thought. And I should be glad if any reader would tell me in what part of his writings it is to be found.

Now, one of my reasons for alluding to this circum-

stance is, that a stranger once came up to me in company, and said he had to thank me for a great benefit done him by a single word in one of my papers. I inquired, with no little interest, what it was; and he said it was the word in question;—probably in the passage just quoted. He told me it had relieved him, by one flash of light, from a long load of mistake and melancholy; for it had shown him the real character of those aspirations after heaven in a certain class of minds (his teachers), which are as grossly self-seeking as the earthliest, and even set it up as a merit and a sanctification.

Keats appears to have been of opinion, that I ought to have taken more notice of what the critics said against him. And perhaps I ought. My notices of them may not have been sufficient. I may have too much contented myself with panegyrizing his genius, and thinking the objections to it of no ultimate importance. Had he given me a hint to another effect, I should have acted upon it. But in truth, as I have before intimated, I did not see a twentieth part of what was said against us; nor had I the slightest notion, at that period, that he took criticism so much to heart. I was in the habit, though a public man, of living in a world of abstractions of my own; and I regarded him as of a nature still more abstracted, and sure of renown. Though

I was a politician (so to speak), I had scarcely a political work in my library. Spensers and Arabian Tales filled up the shelves; and Spenser himself was not remoter, in my eyes, from all the commonplaces of life, than my new friend. Our whole talk was made up of idealisms. In the streets we were in the thick of the old woods. I little suspected, as I did afterwards, that the hunters had struck him; and never at any time did I suspect, that he could have imagined it desired by his friends.—Let me quit the subject of so afflicting a delusion.

In everything but this reserve, which was to a certain extent encouraged by my own incuriousness (for I have no reserve myself with those whom I love),—in every other respect but this, Keats and I might have been taken for friends of the old stamp, between whom there was no such thing even as obligation, except the pleasure of it. I could not love him as deeply as I did Shelley. That was impossible. But my affection was only second to the one which I entertained for that heart of hearts. Keats, like Shelley himself, enjoyed the usual privilege of greatness with all whom he knew, rendering it delightful to be obliged by him, and an equal, but not greater, delight to oblige. It was a pleasure to his friends to have him in their houses, and he did not grudge it. When *Endymion* was published, he was living at Hampstead with his friend, Charles

Armitage Brown, who attended him most affectionately through a severe illness, and with whom, to their great mutual enjoyment, he had taken a journey into Scotland. The lakes and mountains of the north delighted him exceedingly. He beheld them with an epic eye. Afterwards, he went into the south, and luxuriated in the Isle of Wight. On Brown's leaving home a second time, to visit the same quarter, Keats, who was too ill to accompany him, came to reside with me, when his last and best volume of poems appeared, containing *Lamia*, *Isabella*, the *Eve of St. Agnes*, and the noble fragment of *Hyperion*. I remember Lamb's delight and admiration on reading this book; how pleased he was with the designation of Mercury as "the star of Lethe" (rising, as it were, and glittering as he came upon that pale region); and the fine daring anticipation in that passage of the second poem,—

> "So the two brothers and *their murdered man*
> Rode past fair Florence."

So also the description, at once delicate and gorgeous, of Agnes praying beneath the painted window. The public are now well acquainted with those and other passages, for which Persian kings would have filled a poet's mouth with gold. I remember Keats reading to me with great relish and particularity, conscious of what he had set forth,

the lines describing the supper, and ending with the words,

"Lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon."

Mr. Wordsworth would have said that the vowels were not varied enough; but Keats knew where his vowels were *not* to be varied. On the occasion above alluded to, Wordsworth found fault with the repetition of the concluding sound of the participles in Shakspeare's line about bees:—

"The *singing* masons *building* roofs of gold."

This, he said, was a line which Milton would never have written. Keats thought, on the other hand, that the repetition was in harmony with the continued note of the singers, and that Shakspeare's negligence (if negligence it was) had instinctively felt the thing in the best manner. The assertion about Milton is startling, considering the tendency of that great poet to subject his nature to art; yet I have dipped, while writing this, into *Paradise Lost*, and at the second chance have lit on the following:—

"The gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danced,
Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon,
But opposite, *in levelled west*, *was set*
His mirrour, with full force borrowing her light.

The repetition of the *e* in the fourth line is an extreme case in point, being monotonous in order to

express oneness and evenness. Milton would have relished the supper, which his young successor, like a page for him, has set forth. It was Keats who observed to me, that Milton, in various parts of his writings, has shown himself a bit of an epicure, and loves to talk of good eating. That he was choice in his food, and set store by a good cook, there is curious evidence to be found in the proving of his Will; by which it appears, that dining one day "in the kitchen," he complimented Mrs. Milton, by the appropriate title of "Betty," on the dish she had set before him; adding, as if he could not pay her too well for it, "Thou knowest I have left thee all." Henceforth let a kitchen be illustrious, should a gentleman choose to take a cutlet in it. But houses and their customs were different in those days.

Keats had felt that his disease was mortal, two or three years before he died. He had a constitutional tendency to consumption; a close attendance on the deathbed of a beloved brother, when he ought to have been nursing himself in bed, gave it a blow which he felt for months. Despairing love (that is to say, despairing of living to enjoy it, for the love was returned) added its hourly torment; and, meanwhile, the hostile critics came up, and roused an indignation in him, both against them and himself, which on so many accounts he could ill afford to endure.

When I was in Italy, Lord Byron shewed me in manuscript the well-known passage in *Don Juan*, in which Keats's death is attributed to the *Quarterly Review;* the couplet about the "fiery particle," that was "snuffed out by an article." I told him the real state of the case, proving to him that the supposition was a mistake, and therefore, if printed, would be a misrepresentation. But a stroke of wit was not to be given up.

Seeing him once change countenance in a manner more alarming than usual, as he stood silently eyeing the country out of window, I pressed him to let me know how he felt, in order that he might enable me to do what I could for him; upon which he said, that his feelings were almost more than he could bear, and that he feared for his senses. I proposed that we should take a coach, and ride about the country together, to vary if possible, the immediate impression, which was sometimes all that was formidable, and would come to nothing. He acquiesced, and was restored to himself. It was, nevertheless, on the same day, that sitting on the bench in Well Walk, at Hampstead, nearest the Heath,* that he told me, with unaccustomed tears in his eyes, that "his heart was breaking." A doubt, however, was upon him at the time, which he afterwards had reason to know

* The one against the wall.

was groundless; and during his residence at the last house which he occupied before he went abroad, he was at times more than tranquil. At length, he was persuaded by his friends to try the milder climate of Italy. He thought it better for others as well as himself, that he should go. He was accompanied by Mr. Severn, then a young artist of a promise equal to his subsequent repute, and who possessed all that could recommend him for a companion—old acquaintanceship, great animal spirits, active tenderness, and a mind capable of appreciating that of the poet. They went first to Naples, and afterwards to Rome; where, on the 27th of December 1820, our author died in the arms of his friend, completely worn out, and longing for the release. He suffered so much in his lingering, that he used to watch the countenance of the physician for the favourable and fatal sentence, and express his regret when he found it delayed. Yet no impatience escaped him. He was manly and gentle to the last, and grateful for all services. A little before he died, he said that he "felt the daisies growing over him." But he made a still more touching remark respecting his epitaph. "If any," he said, "were put over him, he wished it to consist of nothing but these words: 'Here lies one whose name was writ in water:'"—so little did he think of the more than promise he had given;—of the fine and lasting things he had added to the stock of

poetry. The physicians expressed their astonishment that he had held out so long, the lungs turning out, on inspection, to have been almost obliterated. They said he must have lived upon the mere strength of the spirit within him. He was interred in the English burying-ground at Rome, near the monument of Caius Cestius, where his great mourner, Shelley, was shortly to join him.

Keats, when he died, had just completed his four-and-twentieth year. He was under the middle height; and his lower limbs were small in comparison with the upper, but neat and well turned. His shoulders were very broad for his size: he had a face in which energy and sensibility were remarkably mixed up; an eager power, checked and made patient by ill health. Every feature was at once strongly cut, and delicately alive. If there was any faulty expression, it was in the mouth, which was not without something of a character of pugnacity. The face was rather long than otherwise; the upper lip projected a little over the under; the chin was bold, the cheeks sunken; the eyes mellow and glowing; large, dark, and sensitive. At the recital of a noble action, or a beautiful thought, they would suffuse with tears, and his mouth trembled. In this, there was ill health as well as imagination, for he did not like these betrayals of emotion; and he had great personal as well as moral courage. He once chas-

tised a butcher, who had been insolent, by a regular stand-up fight. His hair, of a brown colour, was fine, and hung in natural ringlets. The head was a puzzle for the phrenologists, being remarkably small in the skull; a singularity which he had in common with Byron and Shelley, whose hats I could not get on. Keats was sensible of the disproportion, above noticed, between his upper and lower extremities; and he would look at his hand, which was faded, and swollen in the veins, and say it was the hand of a man of fifty. He was a seven months' child. His mother, who was a lively woman, passionately fond of amusement, is supposed to have hastened her death by too great an inattention to hours and seasons. Perhaps she hastened that of her son. His father died of a fall from his horse in the year 1804.

I have endeavoured, in another publication,* to characterize the poetry of Keats, both in its merits and defects. It is not necessary to repeat them here. The public have made up their minds on the subject; and such of his first opponents as were men of genius themselves, but suffered their perceptions to be obscured by political prejudice (as who has not in such times?) have long agreed with, or anticipated the verdict. Sir Walter Scott confessed to Mr. Severn

* *Imagination and Fancy*, p. 312.

at Rome, that the truth respecting Keats had prevailed; and it would have been strange, indeed, when the heat of the battle was over, had not Christopher North stretched out his large and warm hand to his memory. Times arrive, under the hallowing influences of thought and trouble, when genius is as sure to acknowledge genius, as it is to feel its own wants, and to be willing to share its glory. A man's eyes, the manlier they are, perceive at last, that there is nothing nobler in them than their tears.

It was during my intimacy with Keats that I published a hasty set of miscellaneous poems, under the title of *Foliage*, and wrote the set of essays that have since become popular under that of the *Indicator*. About this time also, I translated the *Aminta* of Tasso, a poem (be it said with the leave of so great a name) hardly worth the trouble, though the prologue is a charming presentment of love in masquerade, and the *Ode on the Golden Age* a sigh out of the honestest part of the heart of humanity. But I translated it to enable me to meet some demands, occasioned by the falling off in the receipts of the *Examiner*, now declining under the twofold vicissitude of triumphant ascendancy in the Tories, and the desertion of reform by the Whigs. The *Indicator* assisted me still more, though it was but published in a corner, owing to my want of funds for advertising it, and my ignorance of the best mode of

circulating such things;—an ignorance so profound, that I was not even aware of its very self; for I had never attended, not only to the business part of the *Examiner*, but to the simplest money-matter that stared at me on the face of it. I could never tell anybody who asked me, what was the price of its stamp!

Do I boast of this ignorance? Alas! I have no such respect for the pedantry of absurdity as that. I blush for it; and I only record it out of a sheer painful movement of conscience, as a warning to those young authors who might be led to look upon such folly as a fine thing; which at all events is what I never thought it myself. I did not think about it at all, except to avoid the thought; and I only wish that the strangest accidents of education, and the most inconsiderate habit of taking books for the only ends of life, had not conspired to make me so ridiculous I am feeling the consequences at this moment, in pangs which I cannot explain, and which I may not live long enough perhaps to escape.

Let me console myself a little by remembering how much Hazlitt and Lamb, and others, were pleased with the *Indicator*. I speak most of them, because they talked most to me about it. Hazlitt's favourite paper (for they liked it enough to have favourite papers) was the one on *Sleep;* perhaps because there is a picture in it of a sleeping despot;

though he repeated, with more enthusiasm than he was accustomed to do, the conclusion about the parent and the bride. Lamb preferred the paper on *Coaches and their Horses*, that on the *Deaths of Little Children*, and (I think) the one entitled *Thoughts and Guesses on Human Nature*. Shelley took to the story of the *Fair Revenge;* and the paper that was most liked by Keats, if I remember, was the one on a hot summer's day, entitled *A Now*. He was with me while I was writing and reading it to him, and contributed one or two of the passages. Keats first published in the *Indicator* his beautiful poem *La Belle Dame sans Mercy*, and the *Dream after reading Dante's Episode of Paulo and Francesca*. Lord Holland, I was told, had a regard for the portraits of the *Old Lady* and the *Old Gentleman*, &c., which had appeared in the *Examiner;* and a late gallant captain in the navy was pleased to wonder how I became so well acquainted with seamen (in the article entitled *Seamen on Shore*). They had "sat to me" for their portraits. The common sailor was a son of my nurse at school, and the officer a connection of my own by marriage.

One of my pleasantest recollections of the *Indicator* is associated with one of my *quondam* critical enemies, —one, indeed, who had the greatest right to be such, for he was a connection of Sir Walter Scott. I never inquired what particular part he took in his

hostility. I never, in fact, made the inquiry respecting anybody; and there is an excellent old Scottish saying, "Let bygones be bygones." I allude to the author of *Valerius*. Mr. Clowes, jun., told me, that Mr. Lockhart happening to see the *Indicator* lying one day in his father's office, stood reading in it a little, and then said (either to his father or himself), "There is good matter in this book, Mr. Clowes." The young printer, in his right gentleman's spirit, was good enough to make me acquainted with this circumstance; and I hope it may be as pleasant to Mr. Lockhart to see, as it is to me to record it.

Let me take this opportunity of recording my recollections in general of my friend Lamb; of all the world's friend, particularly of his oldest friends, Coleridge and Southey; for I think he never modified or withheld any opinion (in private or bookwards) except in consideration of what he thought they might not like.

Charles Lamb had a head worthy of Aristotle, with as fine a heart as ever beat in human bosom, and limbs very fragile to sustain it. There was a caricature of him sold in the shops, which pretended to be a likeness. Procter went into the shop in a passion, and asked the man what he meant by putting forth such a libel. The man apologized, and said that the artist meant no

offence. There never was a true portrait of Lamb. His features were strongly yet delicately cut: he had a fine eye as well as forehead; and no face carried in it greater marks of thought and feeling. It resembled that of Bacon, with less worldly vigour and more sensibility.

As his frame, so was his genius. It was as fit for thought as could be, and equally as unfit for action; and this rendered him melancholy, apprehensive, humorous, and willing to make the best of everything as it was, both from tenderness of heart and abhorrence of alteration. His understanding was too great to admit an absurdity; his frame was not strong enough to deliver it from a fear. His sensibility to strong contrasts was the foundation of his humour, which was that of a wit at once melancholy and willing to be pleased. He would beard a superstition, and shudder at the old phantasm while he did it. One could have imagined him cracking a jest in the teeth of a ghost, and then melting into thin air himself, out of a sympathy with the awful. His humour and his knowledge both, were those of Hamlet, of Molière, of Carlin, who shook a city with laughter, and, in order to divert his melancholy, was recommended to go and hear himself. Yet he extracted a real pleasure out of his jokes, because good-heartedness retains that

privilege when it fails in everything else. I should say he condescended to be a punster, if condescension had been a word befitting wisdom like his. Being told that somebody had lampooned him, he said, "Very well, I'll Lamb-pun him." His puns were admirable, and often contained as deep things as the wisdom of some who have greater names; — such a man, for instance, as Nicole the Frenchman, who was a baby to him. He would have cracked a score of jokes at him, worth his whole book of sentences; pelted his head with pearls. Nicole would not have understood him, but Rochefoucault would, and Pascal too; and some of our old Englishmen would have understood him still better. He would have been worthy of hearing Shakspeare read one of his scenes to him, hot from the brain. Commonplace found a great comforter in him, as long as it was good-natured; it was to the ill-natured or the dictatorial only that he was startling. Willing to see society go on as it did, because he despaired of seeing it otherwise, but not at all agreeing in his interior with the common notions of crime and punishment, he "*dumbfounded*" a long tirade one evening, by taking the pipe out of his mouth, and asking the speaker, "Whether he meant to say that a thief was not a good man?" To a person abusing Voltaire,

and indiscreetly opposing his character to that of Jesus Christ, he said admirably well (though he by no means overrated Voltaire, nor wanted reverence in the other quarter), that "Voltaire was a very good Jesus Christ *for the French.*" He liked to see the church-goers continue to go to church, and wrote a tale in his sister's admirable little book (*Mrs. Leicester's School*) to encourage the rising generation to do so; but to a conscientious deist he had nothing to object; and if an atheist had found every other door shut against him, he would assuredly not have found his. I believe he would have had the world remain precisely as it was, provided it innovated no farther; but this spirit in him was anything but a worldly one, or for his own interest. He hardly contemplated with patience the new buildings in the Regent's Park: and, privately speaking, he had a grudge against *official* heaven-expounders, or clergymen. He would rather, however, have been with a crowd that he disliked, than felt himself alone. He said to me one day, with a face of great solemnity, "What must have been that man's feelings, who thought himself *the first deist?*" Finding no footing in certainty, he delighted to confound the borders of theoretical truth and falsehood. He was fond of telling wild stories to children, engrafted on things about

them; wrote letters to people abroad, telling them that a friend of theirs had come out in genteel comedy; and persuaded George Dyer that *Lord Castlereagh* was the author of Waverley! The same excellent person walking one evening out of his friend's house into the New River, Lamb (who was from home at the time) wrote a paper under his signature of Elia, stating, that common friends would have stood dallying on the bank, have sent for neighbours, &c. but that *he*, in his magnanimity, jumped in, and rescued his friend after the old noble fashion. He wrote in the same magazine two lives of Liston and Munden, which the public took for serious, and which exhibit an extraordinary jumble of imaginary facts and truth of bye-painting. Munden he made born at "Stoke Pogeis:" the very sound of which was like the actor speaking and digging his words. He knew how many false conclusions and pretensions are made by men who profess to be guided by facts only, as if facts could not be misconceived, or figments taken for them; and therefore, one day, when somebody was speaking of a person who valued himself on being a matter-of-fact man, "Now," said he, "I value myself on being a matter-of-lie man." This did not hinder his being a man of the greatest veracity, in the ordinary sense of the

word; but "truth," he said, "was precious, and not to be wasted on everybody." Those who wish to have a genuine taste of him, and an insight into his modes of life, should read his essays on *Hogarth* and *King Lear*, his *Letters*, his article on the *London Streets*, on *Whist-Playing*, which he loves, and on *Saying Grace before Meat*, which he thinks a strange moment to *select* for being grateful. He said once to a brother whist-player, whose hand was more clever than clean, and who had enough in him to afford the joke, "M., if dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold."

Lamb had seen strange faces of calamity; but they did not make him love those of his fellow-creatures the less. Few persons guessed what he had suffered in the course of his life, till his friend Talfourd wrote an account of it, and shewed the hapless warping that disease had given to the fine brain of his sister.

I will append to this account of Lamb, though I had not the good fortune to know much of him personally, my impression respecting his friend Coleridge.

Coleridge was as little fitted for action as Lamb, but on a different account. His person was of a good height, but as sluggish and solid as the other's was light and fragile. He had, perhaps, suffered

it to look old before its time, for want of exercise. His hair was white at fifty; and as he generally dressed in black, and had a very tranquil demeanour, his appearance was gentlemanly, and for several years before his death was reverend. Nevertheless, there was something invincibly young in the look of his face. It was round and fresh-coloured, with agreeable features, and an open, indolent, good-natured mouth. This boy-like expression was very becoming in one who dreamed and speculated as he did when he was really a boy, and who passed his life apart from the rest of the world, with a book, and his flowers. His forehead was prodigious,—a great piece of placid marble;—and his fine eyes, in which all the activity of his mind seemed to concentrate, moved under it with a sprightly ease, as if it was pastime to them to carry all that thought.

And it was pastime. Hazlitt said, that Coleridge's genius appeared to him like a spirit, all head and wings, eternally floating about in etherealities. He gave me a different impression. I fancied him a good-natured wizard, very fond of earth, and conscious of reposing with weight enough in his easy chair, but able to conjure his etherealities about him in the twinkling of an eye. He could also change them by thousands, and dismiss them as easily when his dinner

came. It was a mighty intellect put upon a sensual body; and the reason why he did little more with it than talk and dream was, that it is agreeable to such a body to do little else. I do not mean that Coleridge was a sensualist in an ill sense. He was capable of too many innocent pleasures, to take any pleasure in the way that a man of the world would take it. The idlest things he did would have had a warrant. But if all the senses, in their time, did not find lodging in that humane plenitude of his, never believe that they did in Thomson or in Boccaccio. Two affirmatives in him made a negative. He was very metaphysical and very corporeal; so in mooting everything, he said (so to speak) nothing. His brains pleaded all sorts of questions before him, and he heard them with so much impartiality (his spleen not giving him any trouble) that he thought he might as well sit in his easy chair and hear them for ever, without coming to a conclusion. It has been said (indeed, he said himself) that he took opium to deaden the sharpness of his cogitations. I will venture to affirm, that if he ever took anything to deaden a sensation within him, it was for no greater or more marvellous reason than other people take it; which is, because they do not take enough exercise, and so plague their heads with their livers. Opium,

perhaps, might have settled an uneasiness of this sort in Coleridge, as it did in a much less man with a much greater body—the Shadwell of Dryden. He would then resume his natural ease, and sit, and be happy, till the want of exercise must be again supplied. The vanity of criticism, like all our other vanities, except that of dress (which, so far, has an involuntary philosophy in it), is always forgetting that we are half made up of body. Hazlitt was angry with Coleridge for not being as zealous in behalf of progress as he used to be when young. I was sorry for it, too; and if other men as well as Hazlitt had not kept me in heart, should have feared that the world was destined to be for ever lost, for want either of perseverance or calmness. But Coleridge had less right to begin his zeal in favour of liberty, than he had to leave it off. He should have bethought himself, first, whether he had the courage not to get fat.

As to the charge against him, of eternally probing the depths of his own mind, and trying what he could make of them beyond the ordinary pale of logic and philosophy, surely there was no harm in a man taking this new sort of experiment upon him, whatever little chance there may have been of his doing anything with it. Coleridge, after all, was but one man, though

an extraordinary man: his faculties inclined him to the task, and were suitable to it; and it is impossible to say what new worlds may be laid open, some day or other, by this apparently hopeless process. The fault of Coleridge, like that of all thinkers indisposed to action, was, that he was too content with things as they were,—at least, too fond of thinking that old corruptions were full of good things, if the world did but understand them. Now, here was the dilemma; for it required an understanding like his own to refine upon and turn them to good as he might do; and what the world requires is not metaphysical refinement, but a hearty use of good sense. Coleridge, indeed, could refine his meaning so as to accommodate it with great good-nature to every one that came across him; and, doubtless, he found more agreement of intention among people of different opinions, than they themselves were aware of; which it was good to let them see. But when not enchained by his harmony, they fell asunder again, or went and committed the greatest absurdities for want of the subtle connecting tie; as was seen in the books of Mr. Irving, who, eloquent in one page, and reasoning in a manner that a child ought to be ashamed of in the next, thought to avail himself, in times like these, of the old menacing tones of

damnation, without being thought a quack or an idiot, purely because Coleridge had shewn him, last Friday, that damnation was not what its preachers took it for. With the same subtlety and good-nature of interpretation, Coleridge would persuade a deist that he was a Christian, and an atheist that he believed in God: all which would be very good, if the world could get on by it, and not remain stationary; but, meanwhile, millions are wretched with having too little to eat, and thousands with having too much; and these subtleties are like people talking in their sleep, when they should be up and helping.

However, if the world is to remain always as it is, give me to all eternity new talk of Coleridge, and new essays of Charles Lamb. They will reconcile it beyond all others: and that is much.

Coleridge was fat, and began to lament, in very delightful verses, that he was getting infirm. There was no old age in his verses. I heard him one day, under the Grove at Highgate, repeat one of his melodious lamentations, as he walked up and down, his voice undulating in a stream of music, and his regrets of youth sparkling with visions ever young. At the same time, he did me the honour to show me that he did not think so ill of all modern liberalism as some might suppose, denouncing the pretensions of the money-getting in a style which I

should hardly venture upon, and never could equal; and asking with a triumphant eloquence, what chastity itself were worth, if it were a casket, not to keep love in, but hate, and strife, and worldliness? On the same occasion, he built up a metaphor out of a flower, in a style surpassing the famous passage in Milton; deducing it from its root in religious mystery, and carrying it up into the bright, consummate flower, "the bridal chamber of reproductiveness." Of all "the Muse's mysteries," he was as great a high-priest as Spenser; and Spenser himself might have gone to Highgate to hear him talk, and thank him for his "Ancient Mariner." His voice did not always sound very sincere; but perhaps the humble and deprecating tone of it, on those occasions, was out of consideration for the infirmities of his hearers, rather than produced by his own. He recited his "Kubla Khan," one morning to Lord Byron, in his lordship's house in Piccadilly, when I happened to be in another room. I remember the other's coming away from him, highly struck with his poem, and saying how wonderfully he talked. This was the impression of everybody who heard him.

It is no secret that Coleridge lived in the Grove at Highgate with a friendly family, who had sense and kindness enough to know that they did themselves honour by looking after the comforts of such a man. His room looked upon a delicious prospect of wood

and meadow, with coloured gardens under the window, like an embroidery to the mantle. I thought, when I first saw it, that he had taken up his dwelling-place like an abbot. Here he cultivated his flowers, and had a set of birds for his pensioners, who came to breakfast with him. He might have been seen taking his daily stroll up and down, with his black coat and white locks, and a book in his hand; and was a great acquaintance of the little children. His main occupation, I believe, was reading. He loved to read old folios, and to make old voyages with Purchas and Marco Polo; the seas being in good visionary condition, and the vessel well stocked with botargoes.*

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* For a more critical summary of my opinions respecting Coleridge's poetry (which I take upon the whole to have been the finest of its time; that is to say, the most quintessential, the most purely emanating from imaginative feeling, unadulterated by "thoughts" and manner), the reader may, if he pleases, consult *Imagination and Fancy*, p. 276.

CHAPTER XVII.

VOYAGE TO ITALY.

Reasons of the author's voyage to Italy.—Desiderata in accounts of voyagers.—Gunpowder.—Setting off.—Noisy navigation of small vessels.—Cabin and berths.—Sea-captains.—Deal pilots and boatmen.—Putting in at Ramsgate.—Condorcet's "Progress of Society."*—A French vessel and its occupants.—Setting off again.—Memorable stormy season.—Character of the captain and mate.—Luigi Rivarola.—Notices of the sailors.—Watching at night.—Discomforts of sea in winter.—A drunken cook.—A goat and ducks.—Hypochondria.—Dullness and superstition of sailors.—A gale of fifty-six hours.*

It was not at Hampstead that I first saw Keats. It was in York-buildings, in the New-road (No. 8), where I wrote part of the *Indicator;* and he resided with me while in Mortimer-terrace, Kentish-town (No. 13), where I concluded it. I mention this for the curious in such things; among whom I am one.

I proceed to hasten over the declining fortunes of the *Examiner.* Politics different from ours were triumphing all over Europe; public sympathy (not the most honourable circumstance of its cha-

racter) is apt to be too much qualified by fortune. Shelley, who had been for some time in Italy, had often invited me abroad; and I had as repeatedly declined going, for the reason stated in my account of him. That reason was done away by a proposal from Lord Byron to go and set up a liberal periodical publication in conjunction with them both. I was ill; it was thought by many I could not live; my wife was very ill too; my family was numerous; and it was agreed by my brother John, that while a struggle was made in England to reanimate the *Examiner*, a simultaneous endeavour should be made in Italy to secure new aid to our prospects, and new friends to the cause of liberty. My family, therefore, packed up such goods and chattels as they had a regard for, my books in particular, and we took, with strange new thoughts and feelings, but in high expectation, our journey by sea.

It was not very discreet to go many hundred miles by sea in winter-time with a large family; but a voyage was thought cheaper than a journey by land. Even that, however, was a mistake. It was by Shelley's advice that I acted: and, I believe, if he had recommended a balloon, I should have been inclined to try it. "Put your music and your books on board a vessel" (it was thus that he wrote to us), "and you will have no more trouble." The sea was to him a pastime; he fancied us bounding over the

waters, the merrier for being tossed; and thought that our will would carry us through anything, as it ought to do, seeing that we brought with us nothing but good things,—books, music, and sociality. It is true, he looked to our coming in autumn, and not in winter; and so we should have done, but for the delays of the captain. We engaged to embark in September, and did not set off till November the 16th.

I have often thought that a sea-voyage, which is generally the dullest thing in the world, both in the experiment and the description, might be turned to different account on paper, if the narrators, instead of imitating the dulness of their predecessors, and recording that it was four o'clock P.M. when they passed Cape St. Vincent, and that on such-and-such-a-day they beheld a porpoise or a Dutchman, would look into the interior of the floating-house they inhabited, and tell us about the seamen and their modes of living; what adventures they have had,—their characters and opinions,—how they eat, drink, and sleep, &c.; what they do in fine weather, and how they endure the sharpness, the squalidness, and inconceivable misery of bad. With a large family around me to occupy my mind, I did not think of this till too late: but I am sure that this mode of treating the subject would be interesting; and what I remember to such purpose, I will set down.

Our vessel was a small brig of a hundred and twenty tons burden, a good tight sea-boat, nothing more. Its cargo consisted of sugar; but it took in also a surreptitious stock of gunpowder, to the amount of fifty barrels, which was destined for Greece. Of this intention we knew nothing, till the barrels were sent on board from a place up the river; otherwise, so touchy a companion would have been objected to, my wife, who was in a shattered state of health, never ceasing to entertain apprehensions on account of it, except when the storms that came upon us presented a more obvious peril. There were nine men to the crew, including the mate. We numbered as many souls, though with smaller bodies, in the cabin, which we had entirely to ourselves; as well we might, for it was small enough.

On the afternoon of the 15th of November (1821), we took leave of some friends, who accompanied us on board; and next morning were awakened by the motion of the vessel, making its way through the shipping in the river. The new life in which we thus, as it were, found ourselves enclosed, the clanking of iron, and the cheerly cries of the seamen, together with the natural vivacity of the time of day, presented something animating to our feelings; but while we thus moved off, not without encouragement, we felt that the friend whom we were going to see was at a great distance, while

others were very near, whose hands it would be a long while before we should touch again, perhaps never. We hastened to get up and busy ourselves; and great as well as small found a novel diversion in the spectacle that presented itself from the deck, our vessel threading its way through the others with gliding bulk.

The next day it blew strong from the south-east, and even in the river (the navigation of which is not easy) we had a foretaste of the alarms and bad weather that awaited us at sea. The pilot, whom we had taken in over-night (and who was a jovial fellow with a whistle like a blackbird, which, in spite of the dislike that sailors have to whistling, he was always indulging), thought it prudent to remain at anchor till two in the afternoon; and at six, a vessel meeting us carried away the jib-boom, and broke in one of the bulwarks. My wife, who had had a respite from the most alarming part of her illness, and whom it was supposed that a sea-voyage, even in winter, might benefit, again expectorated blood with the fright; and I began to regret that I had brought my family into this trouble.—Even in the river we had a foretaste of the sea; and the curse of being at sea to a landman is, that you know nothing of what is going forward, and can take no active part in getting rid of your fears. You cannot "lend a hand." The business of these small vessels is not

carried on with the orderliness and tranquillity of greater ones, or of men-of-war. The crew are not very wise; the captain does not know how to make them so; the storm roars; the vessel pitches and reels; the captain, over your head, stamps and swears, and announces all sorts of catastrophes. Think of a family hearing all this, and parents in alarm for their children!

On Monday, the 19th, we passed the Nore, and proceeded down Channel amidst rains and squalls. We were now out at sea; and a rough taste we had of it. I had been three times in the Channel before, once in hard weather; but I was then a bachelor, and had only myself to think of. Let the reader picture to his imagination the little back-parlour of one of the shops in Fleet-street or the Strand, attached or let into a great moving vehicle, and tumbling about the waves from side to side, now sending all the things that are loose this way, and now that. This will give him an idea of a cabin at sea, such as we occupied. It had a table fastened down in the middle; places let into the walls on each side, one over the other, to hold beds; a short, wide, sloping window, carried off over a bulk, and looking out to sea; a bench, or locker, running under the bulk from one side of the cabin to the other; and a little fireplace opposite, in which it was impossible to keep a fire on account of the wind. The weather,

at the same time, was bitterly cold, as well as wet. On one side of the fireplace was the door, and on the other a door leading into a petty closet dignified with the title of the state-room. In this room we put our servant, the captain sleeping in another closet outside. The berths were occupied by the children, and my wife and myself lay, as long as we could manage to do so, on the floor. Such was the trim, with boisterous wet weather, cold days, and long evenings, on which we set out on our sea-adventure.

At six o'clock in the evening of the 19th, we came to in the Downs, on a line with Sandown Castle. The wind during the night increasing to a gale, the vessel pitched and laboured considerably; and the whole of the next day it blew a strong gale, with hard squalls from the westward. The day after, the weather continuing bad, the captain thought proper to run for Ramsgate, and took a pilot for that purpose.

Captains of vessels are very unwilling to put into harbour, on account of the payment they have to make, and the necessity of supporting the crew for nothing while they remain. Many vessels are lost on this account; and a wonder is naturally expressed, that men can persist in putting their lives into jeopardy, in order to save a few pounds. But when we come to know what a seaman's life is, we see that nothing but the strongest love of gain could induce a

man to take to such a mode of existence; and he is naturally anxious to save what he looks upon as the only tangible proof that he is not the greatest fool in existence. His life, he thinks, is in God's keeping; but his money is in his own. To be sure, a captain who has been to sea fifty times, and has got rich by it, will go again, storms or vows to the contrary notwithstanding; for he does not know what to do with himself on shore; but unless he had the hope of adding to his stock, he would blunder into some other way of business, rather than go, as he would think, for nothing. Occupation is his real necessity, as it is that of other money-getters; but the mode of it, without the visible advantage, he would assuredly give up. I never met with a seaman (and I have put the question to several) who did not own to me that he hated his profession. One of them, a brave and rough subject, told me that there was not a "pickle" of a midshipman, not absolutely a fool, who would not confess that he had rather eschew a second voyage, if he had but the courage to make the avowal.

I know not what the Deal pilot, whom we took on board in the Downs, thought upon this point. If ever there was a bold fellow, it was he; and yet he could eye a squall with a grave look. I speak not so much from what he had to do on the present occasion, though it was a nice business to get us into

Ramsgate harbour; but he had the habit of courage in his face, and was altogether one of the most interesting-looking persons I have seen.

The Deal boatmen are a well-known race; reverenced for their matchless intrepidity, and the lives they have saved. Two of them came on board the day before, giving opinions of the weather, which the captain was loth to take, and at the same time insinuating some little contraband notions, which he took better. I thought how little these notions injured the fine manly cast of their countenances, than which nothing could be more self-possessed and even innocent. They seemed to understand the first principles of the thing, without the necessity of inquiring into it; their useful and noble lives standing them in stead of the pettier ties and sophisms of the interested.

Our pilot was a prince, even of his race. He was a tall man, in a kind of frock-coat, thin but powerful, with high features, and an expression of countenance fit for an Argonaut. When he took the rudder in hand, and stood alone, guiding the vessel towards the harbour, the crew being all busied at a distance from him, and the captain, as usual, at his direction, he happened to put himself into an attitude the most graceful as well as commanding; and a new squall coming up in the horizon, just as we were going to turn in, he gave it a look of lofty sullenness—threat,

as it were, for threat—which was the most magnificent aspect of resolution I ever beheld. Experience and valour assumed their rights, and put themselves on a par with danger. In we turned, to the admiration of the spectators who had come down to the pier, and to the satisfaction of all on board, except the poor captain, who, though it was his own doing, seemed, while gallantly congratulating the lady, to be eyeing, with sidelong pathos, the money that was departing from him.

We stopped for a change of weather nearly three weeks at Ramsgate, where we had visits from more than one London friend, to whom I only wish we could give a tenth part of the consolation when they are in trouble, which they afforded to us. At Ramsgate I picked up Condorcet's *View of the Progress of Society*, which I read with a transport of gratitude to the author, though it had not entered so deeply into the matter as I supposed. But the very power to persevere in hopes for mankind, at a time of life when individuals are in the habit of reconciling their selfishness and fatigue, by choosing to think ill of them, is a great good to any man, and achieves a great good if it act only upon one other person. A few such instances of perseverance would alter the world.

For some days we remained on board, as it was hoped that we should be able to set sail again. Ramsgate harbour is very shallow; and though we

lay in the deepest part of it, the vessel took to a new and ludicrous species of dance, grinding and thumping upon the chalky ground. The consequence was, that the metal pintles of the rudder were all broken, and new ones obliged to be made; which the sailors told us was very lucky, as it proved the rudder not to be in a good condition, and it might have deserted us at sea.

We lay next a French vessel, smaller than our own, the crew of which became amusing subjects of remark. They were always whistling, singing, and joking. The men shaved themselves elaborately, cultivating heroic whiskers; and they strutted up and down, when at leisure, with their arms folded, and the air of naval officers. A woman or two, with kerchiefs and little curls, completed the picture. They all seemed very merry and good-humoured.

At length, tired of waiting on board, we took a quiet lodging at the other end of the town, and were pleased to find ourselves sitting still, and secure of a good rest at night. It is something, after being at sea, to find oneself not running the fork in one's eye at dinner, or suddenly sliding down the floor to the other end of the room. My wife was in a very weak state; but the rest she took was deep and tranquil, and I resumed my walks.

Few of the principal bathing-places have anything worth looking at in the neighbourhood, and Ramsgate

has less than most. Pegwell Bay is eminent for shrimps. Close by was Sir William Garrow, and a little farther on was Sir William Curtis. The sea is a grand sight, but it becomes tiresome and melancholy,—a great monotonous idea; at least one thinks so, when not happy. I was destined to see it grander, and dislike it more. With great injustice; for all the works of nature are beautiful, and their beauty is not to be subjected to our petty vicissitudes.

On Tuesday the 11th of December, we set forth again, in company with nearly a hundred vessels, the white sails of which, as they shifted and presented themselves in different quarters, made an agreeable spectacle, exhibiting a kind of noble minuet. My wife was obliged to be carried down to the pier in a sedan; and the taking leave, a second time, of a dear friend, rendered our new departure a melancholy one. I would have stopped and waited, for summer-time, had not circumstances rendered it advisable for us to persevere; and my wife herself fully agreed with me, and even hoped for benefit, as well as a change of weather.

Unfortunately, the promise to that effect lasted us but a day. The winds recommenced the day following, and there ensued such a continuity and vehemence of bad weather as rendered the winter of 1821 memorable in the shipping annals. It strewed the whole of the north-western coast of Europe with

wrecks. Some readers may remember that winter. It was the one in which Mount Hecla burst out into flame, and Dungeness lighthouse was struck with lightning. The mole at Genoa was dilapidated. Next year there were between fourteen and fifteen thousand sail less upon Lloyd's books; which, valued at an average at £1,500, made a loss of two millions of money;—the least of all the losses, considering the feelings of survivors. Fifteen hundred sail (colliers) were wrecked on the single coast of Jutland.

Of this turmoil we were destined to have a sufficient experience; and I will endeavour to give the reader a taste of it, as he sits comfortably in his chair. He has seen what sort of cabin we occupied. I will now speak of the crew and their mode of living, and what sort of trouble we partook in common. The reader may encounter it himself afterwards if he pleases, and it may do him good; but again I exhort him not to think of taking a family with him, if he can go by land.

Our captain, who was also proprietor of the vessel, had been master of a man-of-war; and he was more refined in his manners than captains of small merchantmen are used to be. He was a clever seaman, or he would not have occupied his former post; and I dare say he conducted us well up and down Channel. The crew, when they were exhausted, accused him of a wish of keeping us out at sea, to save

charges,—perhaps unjustly; for he became so alarmed himself, or was so little able to enter into the alarms of others, that he would openly express his fears before my wife and children. He was a man of connections superior to his calling; and the consciousness of this, together with success in life, and a good complexion and set of features which he had had in his time, rendered him, though he was getting old, a bit of a coxcomb. When he undertook to be agreeable, he assumed a cleaner dress, and a fidgety sort of effeminacy, which contrasted ludicrously with his old clothes and his doleful roughness during a storm. While it was foul weather, he was roaring and swearing at the men, like a proper captain of a brig, and then grumbling and saying, "Lord bless us and save us!" in the cabin. If a glimpse of promise re-appeared, he put on a coat and aspect to correspond, paid compliments to the lady, and told stories of other fair passengers whom he had conveyed charmingly to their destination. He wore powder; but this not being sufficient to conceal the colour of his hair, he told us it had turned grey when he was a youth, from excessive fright in being left upon a rock. This confession made me conclude that he was a brave man, in spite of his exclamations. I saw him among his kindred, and he appeared to be an object of interest to some respectable maiden sisters, whom he treated kindly, and for whom all the money

perhaps, that he scraped together, was intended. He was chary of his "best biscuit," but fond of children; and he was inclined to take me for a Jonah for not reading the Bible, while he made love to the maid-servant. Of such incongruities are people made, from the great captain to the small!

Our mate was a tall handsome young man, with a countenance of great refinement for a seaman. He was of the humblest origin: yet a certain gentility was natural in him, as he proved by a hundred little circumstances of attention to the women and children, when consolation was wanted, though he did not do it ostentatiously or with melancholy. If a child was afraid, he endeavoured to amuse him with stories. If the women asked him anxiously how things were going on, he gave them a cheerful answer; and he contrived to show by his manner, that he did not do so in order to make a show of his courage at their expense. He was attentive without officiousness, and cheerful with quiet. The only fault I saw in him, was a tendency to lord it over a Genoese boy, an apprentice to the captain, who seemed ashamed of being among the crew, and perhaps gave himself airs. But a little tyranny will creep into the best natures (if not informed enough), under the guise of a manly superiority; as may be seen so often in boys at school.

The little Genoese was handsome, and had the

fine eyes of the Italians. Seeing he was a foreigner, when we first went on board, we asked him whether he was not an Italian. He said, No; he was a Genoese. It is the Lombards, I believe, that are more particularly understood to be Italians, when a distinction of this kind is made; but I never heard it afterwards. He complained to me one day, that he wanted books and *poetry;* and said that the crew were a "*brutta gente*" (a vulgar set). I afterwards met him in Genoa, when he looked as gay as a lark, and was dressed like a gentleman. His name was a piece of music,—Luigi Rivarola.

There was another foreigner on board, a Swede, as rough a subject and northern, as the Genoese was full of the "sweet south." He had the reputation of being a capital seaman, which enabled him to grumble to better advantage than the others. A coat of the mate's hung up to dry in a situation not perfectly legal, was not to be seen by him without a comment. The fellow had an honest face withal, but brute and fishy, not unlike a Triton's in a picture. He gaped up at a squall, with his bony look, and the hair over his eyes, as if he could dive out of it in case of necessity.

Very different was a fat, fair-skinned carpenter, with a querulous voice, who complained openly on all occasions, and in private was very earnest with the passengers to ask the captain to put into port.

And very different again from him was a jovial straightforward seaman, a genuine Jack Tar, with a snub nose and an under lip thrust out, such as we see in caricatures. He rolled about with the vessel, as if his feet had suckers; and he had an oath and a jest every morning for the bad weather. He said he would have been "d—d" before he had come to sea this time, if he had known what sort of weather it was to be; but it was not so bad for him as for the gentlefolks with their children.

The crew occupied a little cabin at the other end of the vessel, into which they were tucked in their respective cribs, like so many herrings. The weather was so bad, that a portion of them, sometimes all, were up at night, as well as the men on watch. The business of the watch is to see that all is safe, and to look out for vessels ahead. He is very apt to go to sleep, and is sometimes waked with a pail of water chucked over him. The tendency to sleep is very natural, and the sleep in fine weather delicious. Shakspeare may well introduce a sailor boy sleeping on the top-mast, and enjoying a luxury that kings might envy. But there is no doubt that the luxury of the watcher is often the destruction of the vessel. The captains themselves, glad to get to rest, are careless. When we read of vessels run down at sea, we are sure to find it owing to negligence. This was the case with regard to a steam-vessel, the

Comet, which excited great interest at this time. A passenger, anxious and kept awake, is surprised to see the eagerness with which every seaman, let the weather be what it may, goes to bed when it comes to his turn. Safety, if they can have it; but sleep at all events. This seems to be their motto. If they are to be drowned, they would rather have the two beds together, the watery and the worsted. Dry is too often a term inapplicable to the latter. In our vessel, night after night, the wet penetrated into the seamen's berths; and the poor fellows, their limbs stiff and aching with cold, and their hands blistered with toil, had to get into beds, as wretched as if a pail of water had been thrown over them.

Such were the lives of our crew from the 12th till the 22nd of December, during which time we were beaten up and down Channel, twice touching the Atlantic, and driven back again like a hunted ox. One of the gales lasted, without intermission, fifty-six hours; blowing all the while as if it would "split its cheeks." The oldest seaman on board had never seen rougher weather in Europe. In some parts of the world, both east and west, there is weather of sudden and more outrageous violence; but none of the crew had experienced tempests of longer duration, or more violent for the climate.

The worst of being at sea in weather like this, next to your inability to do anything, is the multi-

tude of petty discomforts with which you are surrounded. You can retreat into no comfort, great or small. Your feet are cold; you can take no exercise on account of the motion of the vessel; and a fire will not keep in. You cannot sit in one posture. You lie down, because you are sick; or if others are more sick, you must keep your legs as well as you can, to help them. At meals, the plates and dishes slide away, now to this side, now that; making you laugh, it is true; but you laugh more out of spleen than merriment. Twenty to one you are obliged to keep your beds, and chuck the cold meat to one another; or the oldest and strongest does it for the rest, desperately remaining at table, and performing all the slides, manœuvres, and sudden rushes, which the fantastic violence of the cabin's movements has taught him. Tea (which, for the refreshment it affords in toil and privation, may be called the traveller's wine) is taken as desperately as may be, provided you can get boiling water; the cook making his appearance, when he can, with his feet asunder, clinging to the floor, and swaying to and fro with the kettle.

By the way, I have not mentioned our cook; he was a Mulatto, a merry knave, constantly drunk. But the habit of drinking, added to a quiet and sly habit of uttering his words, had made it easy to him to pretend sobriety when he was most intoxicated; and I believe he deceived the whole of the people on

board, except ourselves. The captain took him for a special good fellow. He felt particularly grateful for his refusals of a glass of rum; the secret of which was, that the man could get at the rum whenever he liked, and was never without a glass of it in his head. He stood behind you at meals, kneading the floor with his feet, as the vessel rolled; drinking in all the jokes, or would-be jokes, that were uttered; and laughing like a goblin. The captain, who had eyes for nothing but what was right before him, seldom noticed his merry devil; but if you caught his eye, there he was, shaking his shoulders without a word, while his twinkling eyes seemed to run over with rum and glee.

This fellow, who swore horrid oaths in a tone of meekness, used to add to my wife's horrors by descending, drunk as he was, with a lighted candle into the "Lazaret," which was a hollow under the cabin, opening with a trap-door, and containing provisions and a portion of the gunpowder. The portion was small, but sufficient, she thought, with the assistance of his candle, to blow us up. Fears for her children occupied her mind from morning till night, when she sank into an uneasy sleep. While she was going to sleep I read, and did not close my eyes till towards morning, thinking (with a wife by my side, and seven children around me) what I should do in case of the worst. My imagination

naturally tenacious, and exasperated by ill health, clung, not to every relief, but to every shape of ill that I could fancy. I was tormented with the consciousness of being unable to divide myself into as many pieces as I had persons requiring assistance; and must not scruple to own that I suffered a constant dread, which appeared to me very unbecoming a man of spirit. However, I expressed no sense of it to anybody. I did my best to do my duty and keep up the spirits of those about me; and your nervousness being a great dealer in your joke fantastic, I succeeded apparently with all, and certainly with the children.

The most uncomfortable thing in the vessel was the constant wet. Below it penetrated, and on deck you could not appear with dry shoes but they were speedily drenched. Mops being constantly in use at sea (for seamen are very clean in that respect, and keep their vessels as nice as a pet infant), the sense of wet was always kept up, whether in wetting or drying; and the vessel, tumbling about, looked like a wash-house in a fit.

We had a goat on board, a present from a kind friend, anxious that we should breakfast as at home. The storms frightened away its milk, and Lord Byron's dog afterwards bit off its ear. But the ducks had the worst of it. These were truly a sight to make a man hypochondriacal. They were

kept in miserable narrow coops, over which the sea constantly breaking, the poor wretches were drenched and beaten to death. Every morning, when I came upon deck, some more were killed, or had their legs and wings broken. The captain grieved for the loss of his ducks, and once went so far as to add to the number of his losses by putting one of them out of its misery; but nobody seemed to pity them otherwise.

This was not inhumanity, but want of thought. The idea of pitying live-stock when they suffer, enters with as much difficulty into a head uneducated to that purpose, as the idea of pitying a diminished piece of beef or a stolen pig.

I took care not to inform the children how much the creatures suffered. My family, with the exception of the eldest boy, who was of an age to acquire experience, always remained below; and the children, not aware of any danger (for I took care to qualify what the captain said, and they implicitly believed me), were as gay, as confinement and uneasy beds would allow them to be. With the poor ducks I made them very merry one night, by telling them to listen when the next sea broke over us, and they would hear an acquaintance of theirs laughing. The noise they made with their quacking, when they gathered breath after the suffocation of the salt water, was exactly like what I said: the children listened,

and at every fresh agony there was a shout. Being alarmed one night by the captain's open expression of his apprehension, I prepared the children for the worst that might happen, by telling them that the sea sometimes broke into a cabin, and then there was a dip over head and ears for the passengers, after which they laughed and made merry. The only time I expressed apprehension to anybody was to the mate one night, when we were wearing ship off the Scilly rocks, and everybody was in a state of anxiety. I asked him, in case of the worst, to throw open the lid of the cabin-stairs, that the sea might pour in upon us as fast as possible. He begged me not to have any sad thoughts, for he said I should give them to him, and he had none at present. At the same time, he turned and severely rebuked the carpenter, who was looking doleful at the helm, for putting notions into the heads of the passengers. The captain was unfortunately out of hearing.

I did wrong at that time not to "feed better," as the phrase is. My temperance was a little ultra-theoretical and excessive; and the mate and I were the only men on board who drank no spirits. Perhaps there were not many men out in those dreadful nights in the Channel, who could say as much. The mate, as he afterwards let me know, felt the charge upon him too great to venture upon an artificial state of courage; and I feared that what courage was left

me, might be bewildered. The consequence was, that from previous illness and constant excitation, my fancy was sickened into a kind of hypochondriacal investment and shaping of things about me. A little more, and I might have imagined the fantastic shapes which the action of the sea is constantly interweaving out of the foam at the vessel's side, to be sea-snakes, or more frightful hieroglyphics. The white clothes that hung up on pegs in the cabin, took, in the gloomy light from above, an aspect like things of meaning; and the winds and rain together, as they ran blind and howling along by the vessel's side, when I was on deck, appeared like frantic spirits of the air, chasing and shrieking after one another, and tearing each other by the hair of their heads. "The grandeur of the glooms" on the Atlantic was majestic indeed: the healthiest eye would have seen them with awe. The sun rose in the morning, at once fiery and sicklied over; a livid gleam played on the water, like the reflection of lead; then the storms would recommence; and during partial clearings off, the clouds and fogs appeared standing in the sky, moulded into gigantic shapes, like antediluvian wonders, or visitants from the zodiac; mammoths, vaster than have yet been thought of; the first ungainly and stupendous ideas of bodies and legs, looking out upon an unfinished world. These fancies were ennobling, from their

magnitude. The pain that was mixed with some of the others, I might have displaced by a fillip of the blood.

Two days after we left Ramsgate, the wind blowing violently from the south-west, we were under close-reefed topsails; but on its veering to westward, the captain was induced to persevere, in hopes that by coming round to the north-west, it would enable him to clear the Channel. The ship laboured very much, the sea breaking over her; and the pump was constantly going.

The next day, the 14th, we shipped a great deal of water, the pump going as before. The fore-topsail and foresail were taken in; the storm staysail set; and the captain said we were "in the hands of God." We now wore ship to southward.

On the 15th, the weather was a little moderated, with fresh gales and cloudy. The captain told us to-day how his hair turned white in a shipwreck; and the mate entertained us with an account of the extraordinary escape of himself and some others from an American pirate, who seized their vessel, plundered and made it a wreck, and confined them under the hatches, in the hope of their going down with it. They escaped in a rag of a boat, and were taken up by a Greek vessel, which treated them with the greatest humanity. The pirate was afterwards taken and hung at Malta, with five of his men. This

story, being tragical without being tempestuous, and terminating happily for our friend, was very welcome, and occupied us agreeably. I tried to elicit some ghost stories of vessels, but could hear of nothing but the *Flying Dutchman;* nor did I succeed better on another occasion. This dearth of supernatural adventure is remarkable, considering the superstition of sailors. But their wits are none of the liveliest; the sea blunts while it mystifies; and the sailor's imagination, driven in, like his body, to the vessel he inhabits, admits only the petty wonders that come directly about him in the shape of storm-announcing fishes and birds. His superstition is that of a blunted and not of an awakened ignorance. Sailors had rather sleep than see visions.

On the 16th, the storm was alive again, with strong gales and heavy squalls. We set the fore storm-staysail anew, and at night the jolly-boat was torn from the stern.

The afternoon of the 17th brought us the gale that lasted fifty-six hours, "one of the most tremendous," the captain said, "that he had ever witnessed." All the sails were taken in, except the close-reefed topsail and one of the trysails. At night, the wind being at south-west, and Scilly about fifty miles north by east, the trysail sheet was carried away, and the boom and sail had a narrow escape. We were now continually wearing ship.

The boom was unshipped, as it was; and it was a melancholy sight to see it lying next morning, with the sail about it, like a wounded servant who had been fighting. The morning was occupied in getting it to rights. At night we had hard squalls with lightning.

We lay-to under main-topsail until the next morning, the 19th, when at ten o'clock we were enabled to set the reefed foresail, and the captain prepared to run for Falmouth; but finding he could not get in till night, we hauled to the wind, and at three in the afternoon, wore ship to south-westward. It was then blowing heavily; and the sea, breaking over the vessel, constantly took with it a part of the bulwark. I believe we had long ceased to have a duck alive. The poor goat had contrived to find itself a corner in the long-boat, and lay frightened and shivering under a piece of canvass. I afterwards took it down in the cabin to share our lodging; but not having a berth to give it, it passed a sorry time, tied up and slipping about the floor. At night we had lightning again, with hard gales, the wind being west and north-west, and threatening to drive us on the French coast. It was a grand thing, through the black and turbid atmosphere, to see the great fiery eye of the lighthouse at the Lizard Point: it looked like a good genius with a ferocious aspect. Ancient mythology would have made dragons of these noble

structures,—dragons with giant glare, warning the seaman off the coast.

The captain could not get into Falmouth: so he wore ship, and stood to the westward with fresh hopes, the wind having veered a little to the north; but, after having run above fifty miles to the south and west, the wind veered again in our teeth, and at two o'clock on the 20th, we were reduced to a close-reefed main-topsail, which, being new, fortunately held, the wind blowing so hard that it could not be taken in without the greatest risk of losing it. The sea was very heavy, and the rage of the gale tremendous, accompanied with lightning. The children on these occasions slept, unconscious of their danger. My wife slept, too, from exhaustion. I remember, as I lay awake that night, looking about to see what help I could get from imagination, to furnish a moment's respite from the anxieties that beset me, I cast my eyes on the poor goat; and recollecting how she devoured some choice biscuit I gave her one day, I got up, and going to the cupboard took out as much as I could find, and occupied myself in seeing her eat. She munched the fine white biscuit out of my hand, with equal appetite and comfort; and I thought of a saying of Sir Philip Sidney's, that we are never perfectly miserable when we can do a good-natured action.

I will not dwell upon the thoughts that used to

pass through my mind respecting my wife and children. Many times, especially when a little boy of mine used to weep in a manner equally sorrowful and good-tempered, I thought of Prospero and his infant Miranda in the boat,—"me and thy crying self;" and many times of a similar divine fragment of Simonides. It seemed as if I had no right to bring so many little creatures into such jeopardy, with peril to their lives and to all future enjoyment; but sorrow and trouble suggested other reflections too:—consolations, which even to be consoled with is calamity. However, I will not recall those feelings any more. Next to tragical thoughts like these, one of the modes of tormenting oneself at sea, is to raise those pleasant pictures of contrast, dry and firm-footed, which our friends are enjoying in their warm rooms and radiant security at home. I used to think of them one after the other, or of several of them together, reading, chatting, and laughing, playing music, or complaining that they wanted a little movement and must dance; then retiring to easy beds amidst happy families; and perhaps, as the wind howled, thinking of us. Perhaps, too, they thought of us sometimes in the midst of their merriment, and longed for us to share it with them. That they did so, is certain; but, on the other hand, what would we not have given to be sure of the instant at which they were making these reflections; and how im-

possible was it to attain to this, or to any other dry-ground satisfaction! Sometimes I could not help smiling to think how Munden would have exclaimed, in the character of Croaker, "We shall all be blown up!" The gunpowder I seldom thought of; but it seemed to give my feet a sting sometimes, as I remembered it in walking the deck. The demand for dry land was considerable. That is the point with landsmen at sea;—something unwet, unconfined, but, above all, firm, and that enables you to take your own steps, physical and moral. Panurge has it in Rabelais.

But I must put an end to this mirth; for "a large vessel is coming right down upon us;—lights—lights!" This was the cry at eleven o'clock at night, on the 21st December, the gale being tremendous, and the sea to match. Lanthorns were handed up from the cabin, and, one after the other, put out. The captain thought it was owing to the weather; but it was the drunken steward, who jolted them out as he took them up the ladder. We furnished more, and contrived to see them kept in; and the captain afterwards told me that we had saved his vessel. The ship, discerning us just in time, passed ahead, looking very huge and terrible. Next morning, we saw her about two miles on our lee-bow, lying-to under trysails. It was an Indiaman. There was another vessel, a smaller, near us in the night. I

thought the Indiaman looked very comfortable, with its spacious and powerful body: but the captain said we were better off a great deal in our own sea-boat; which turned out to be too true, if this was the same Indiaman, as some thought it, which was lost the night following off the coast of Devonshire. The crew said, that in one of the pauses of the wind they heard a vessel go down. We were at that time near land. While drinking tea, the keel of our ship grated against something, perhaps a shoal. The captain afterwards very properly made light of it; but at the time, being in the act of raising a cup to his mouth, I remember he turned very grave, and, getting up, went upon deck.

Next day, the 22nd, we ran for Dartmouth, and succeeding this time, found ourselves, at twelve o'clock at noon, in the middle of Dartmouth harbour.—

"Magno telluris amore
Egressi, optata potiuntur Troës arena."

"The Trojans, worn with toils, and spent with woes,
Leap on the welcome land, and seek their wish'd repose."

Dryden had never been at sea, or he would not have translated the passage in that manner. Virgil knew better; and besides, he had the proper ancient hydrophobia to endear his fancy to the dry ground. He says, that the Trojans had got an absolute *affection* for *terra firma*, and that they now enjoyed what they had longed for. Virgil, it must be con-

fessed, talks very tenderly of the sea for an epic poet. Homer grapples with it in a different style. The Greek would hardly have recognised his old acquaintance Æneas in that pious and frightened personage, who would be designated, I fear, by a modern sailor, a psalm-singing milksop. But Homer, who was a traveller, is the only poet among the ancients who speaks of the sea in a modern spirit. He talks of brushing the waves merrily; and likens them, when they are dark, to his Chian wine. But Hesiod, though he relates with a modest grandeur that he had once been to sea, as far as from Aulis to Chalcis, is shocked at the idea of anybody venturing upon the water except when the air is delicate and the water harmless. A spring voyage distresses him, and a winter he holds to be senseless. Moschus confesses, that the very sight of the ocean makes him retreat into the woods; the only water he loves being a fountain to listen to, as he lies on the grass. Virgil took a trip to Athens, during which he may be supposed to have undergone all the horrors which he holds to be no disgrace to his hero. Horace's distress at his friend's journey, and amazement at the hard-hearted wretch who first ventured to look upon the sea on ship-board, are well known. A Hindoo could not have a greater dread of the ocean. Poor Ovid, on his way to the place of his exile, wonders how he can write a line. These were delicate gentlemen at

the court of Augustus; and the ancients, it may be said, had very small and bad vessels, and no compass. But their moral courage appears to have been as poor in this matter as their physical. Nothing could have given a Roman a more exalted idea of Cæsar's courage, than his famous speech to the pilot:—"You carry Cæsar and his fortunes!"

The poets who take another road to glory, and think no part of humanity alien from them, spoke out in a different manner. Their office being to feel with all, and their nature disposing them to it, they seem to think themselves privileged to be bold or timid, according to circumstances; and doubtless they are so, imagination being the moving cause in both instances. They perceive, also, that the boldest of men are timid under circumstances in which they have no experience; and this helps the agreeable insolence of their candour. Rochester said, that every man would confess himself a coward, if he had but courage enough to do so:—a saying worthy of an ingenious debauchee, and as false with respect to individuals, as it is, perhaps, true with regard to the circumstances under which any one may find himself. The same person who shall turn pale in a storm at sea, shall know not what it is to fear the face of man; and the most fearless of sailors shall turn pale (as I have seen them do) even in storms of an unusual description. I have related a scuffle with

a party of fishermen on the Thames, when in the height of their rage they were checked and made civil by the mention of the word *law*. Rochester talked like the shameless coward that he had made himself; but even Sir Philip Sidney, the flower of chivalry, who would have gone through any danger out of principle (which, together with the manly habits that keep a man brave, is the true courage), does not scruple to speak, with a certain dread, of ships and their strange lodgings.

"Certainly," says he, in his *Arcadia* (Book II.), "there is no danger carries with it more horror, than that which grows in those floating kingdoms. For that dwelling-place is unnatural to mankind; and then the terribleness of the continual motion, the desolation of the being far from comfort, the eye and the ear having ugly images ever before them, doth still vex the mind, even when it is best armed against it."

Ariosto, a soldier as well as poet, who had fought bravely in the wars, candidly confesses that he is for taking no sea voyages, but is content to explore the earth with Ptolemy, and travel in a map. This, he thinks, is better than putting up prayers in a storm. (Satire 3. Chi vuol andar intorno, &c.) But the most amusing piece of candour on this point is that of Berni, in his *Orlando Innamorato*, one of the models of the Don Juan style. Berni was a

good fellow for a rake; and bold enough, though a courtier, to refuse aiding a wicked master in his iniquities. He was also stout of body, and a great admirer of achievements in others, which he dwells upon with a masculine relish. But the sea he cannot abide. He probably got a taste of it in the Adriatic, when he was at Venice. He is a fine describer of a storm, and puts a hero of his at the top of one in a very elevated and potent manner: (See the description of Rodomonte, at the beginning of one of his cantos.) But in his own person, he disclaims all partnership with such exaltations; and earnestly exhorts the reader, on the faith of his experience, not to think of quitting dry land for an instant.

"Se vi poteste un uomo immaginare,
Il qual non sappia quel che sia paura;
E se volete un bel modo trovare
Da spaventar ogni anima sicura;
Quando e fortuna, mettetel' in mare.
Se non lo teme, se non se ne cura,
Colui per pazzo abbiate, e non ardito,
Perch' è diviso da la morte un dito.

"È un' orribil cosa il mar crocciato:
È meglio udirlo, che farne la prova.
Creda ciascun a chi dentro v' è stato;
E per provar, di terra non si mova."

CANTO 64, st. 4.

Reader, if you suppose that there can be,
In nature, one that 's ignorant of fear;
And if you 'd show the man, as prettily
As possible, how people can feel queer,—

When there's a tempest, clap him in the sea.
If he 's not frightened, if he doesn't care,
Count him a stupid idiot, and not brave,
Thus with a straw betwixt him and the grave.

A sea in torment is a dreadful thing:
Much better lie and listen to, than try it.
Trust one who knows its desperate pummelling;
And while on *terra firma*, pray stick by it.

Full of Signor Berni's experience, and having, in the shape of our children, seven more reasons than he had to avail ourselves of it, we here bade adieu to our winter voyage, and resolved to put forth again in a better season. It was a very expensive change of purpose, and cost us more trouble than I can express; but I had no choice, seeing my wife was so ill. A few days afterwards, she was obliged to have forty ounces of blood taken from her, to save her life.

Dartmouth is a pretty, forlorn place, deserted of its importance. Chaucer's "Schippmann" was born there, and it still produces excellent seamen; but, instead of its former dignity as a port, it looks like a petty town deserted of its neighbourhood, and left to grow wild and solitary. The beautiful vegetation immediately about it, added to the bare hills in the background, completes this look of forlornness, and produces an effect like that of the grass growing in the streets of a metropolis. The harbour is land-locked with hills and wood, and a bit of an old castle

at the entrance; forming a combination very picturesque. Among the old families remaining in that quarter, the Prideaux, relations of the ecclesiastical historian, live in this town; and going up a solitary street on the hill-side, I saw on a door the name of Wolcot, a memorandum of a different sort. Peter Pindar's family, like the divine's, are from Cornwall.

We left Dartmouth, where no ships were in the habit of sailing for Italy, and went to Plymouth; intending to set off again with the beginning of spring, in a vessel bound for Genoa. But the mate of it, who, I believe, grudged us the room we should deprive him of, contrived to tell my wife a number of dismal stories, both of the ship and its captain, who was an unlucky fellow that seemed marked by fortune. Misery had also made him a Calvinist,—the most miserable of all ways of getting comfort; and this was no additional recommendation. To say the truth, having a pique against my fears on the former occasion, I was more bent on allowing myself to have none on the present; otherwise, I should not have thought of putting forth again till the fine weather was complete. But the reasons that prevailed before, had now become still more imperative; my wife being confined to her bed, and undergoing repeated bleedings: so, till summer we waited.

Plymouth is a proper commercial town, unpicturesque in itself, with an overgrown suburb, or dock,

which has become a town distinct, and other suburbs carrying other towns along the coast. But the country up the river is beautiful; and Mount-Edgecumbe is at hand, with its enchanted island, like a piece of old poetry by the side of new money-getting. Lord Lyttleton, in some pretty verses, has introduced the gods, with Neptune at their head, and the nymphs of land and sea, contesting for the proprietorship of it;—a dispute which Jupiter settles by saying, that he made Mount-Edgecumbe for them all. But the best compliment paid it was by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, admiral of the Spanish Armada, who, according to Fuller, marked it out from the sea as his portion of the booty. "But," says Fuller, "he had catched a great cold, had he had no other clothes to wear than those which were to be made of a skin of a bear not killed." In the neighbourhood is a seat of the Carews, the family of the historian of Cornwall, and kinsmen of the poet. Near it, on the other side of the river, was the seat of the Killigrews; another family which became celebrated in the annals of wit and poetry.* The tops of the two mansions looked at one another over the trees. In the grounds of the former is a bowling-green, the scene of a once fashionable amusement, now grown out of use; which is a pity. Fashion

* *Worthies of England*, vol. i. p. 208. Edit. 1811.

cannot too much identify itself with what is healthy; nor has England been "merry England" since late hours and pallid faces came into vogue. But our sedentary thoughts, it is to be hoped, will assist their own remedy, and in the end leave us better off than before.

The sea upon the whole had done me good, and I found myself able to write again, though by driblets. We lived very quietly at Stone-house, opposite Mount-Edgecumbe, nursing our hopes for a new voyage, and expecting one of a very different complexion, in sailing towards an Italian summer. My wife kept her bed almost the whole time, and lost a great deal of blood; but the repose, together with the sea-air, was of service to her, and enabled her to receive benefit on resuming our journey.

Thus quietly we lived, and thus should have continued, agreeably to both of our inclinations; but some friends of the *Examiner* heard of our being in the neighbourhood, and the privatest of all public men (if I may be ranked among the number) found himself complimented by his readers, face to face, and presented with a silver cup. I then had a taste of the Plymouth hospitality, and found it friendly and cordial to the last degree, as if the seaman's atmosphere gave a new spirit to the love of books and liberty. Nor, as the poet would say, was music wanting; nor fair faces, the crown of welcome.

Besides the landscapes in the neighbourhood, I had the pleasure of seeing some beautiful ones in the painting-room of Mr. Rogers, a very clever artist and intelligent man, who has travelled, and can think for himself. But my great *Examiner* friend, who afterwards became a personal one, was Mr. Hine, subsequently master of an academy near the metropolis, and the most attentive and energetic person of his profession that I ever met with. My principal visitors, indeed, at Plymouth consisted of schoolmasters;—one of those signs of the times, which has not been so ill regarded since the accession of a lettered and liberal minister to the government of this country, as they were under the supercilious ignorance, and (to say the truth) well-founded alarm of some of his predecessors.

The Devonshire people, as far as I had experience of them, were pleasant and good-humoured. Queen Elizabeth said of their gentry, that they were "all born courtiers with a becoming confidence." I know not how that may be, though she had a good specimen in Sir Walter Raleigh. But the private history of modern times might exhibit instances of natives of Devonshire winning their way into regard and power by the force of a well-constituted mixture of sweet and strong; and it is curious that the milder climate of that part of England should have produced more painters, perhaps, of a superior kind, than any other

two counties can show. Drake, Jewel, Hooker, and old Fortescue, were also Devonshire-men; William Browne, the most genuine of Spenser's disciples; and Gay, the enjoying and the good-hearted, the natural man in the midst of the sophisticate.

We left Plymouth on the 13th of May 1822, accompanied by some of our new friends who would see us on board; and set sail in a fresh vessel, on our new summer voyage, a very different one from the last. Short acquaintances sometimes cram as much into their intercourse, as to take the footing of long ones; and our parting was not without pain. Another shadow was cast on the female countenances by the observation of our boatman, who, though an old sailor who ought to have known better, bade us remark how heavily laden our ship was, and how deep she lay in the water: so little can ignorance afford to miss an opportunity of being important.

Our new captain, and, I believe, all his crew, were Welsh, with the exception of one sailor, an unfortunate Scotchman, who seemed pitched among them to have his nationality put to the torture. Jokes were unceasingly cracked on the length of his person, the oddity of his dialect, and the uncouth manner in which he stood at the helm. It was a new thing to hear Welshmen cutting up the barbarism of the "Modern Athens"; but they had the advantage of the poor fellow in wit, and he took it with a sort of

sulky patience, that showed he was not destitute of one part of the wisdom of his countrymen. To have made a noise would have been to bring down new shouts of laughter; so he pocketed the affronts as well as he might, and I could not help fancying that his earnings lay in the same place more securely than most of those about him. The captain was choleric and *brusque*, a temperament which was none the better for an inclination to plethora; but his enthusiasm in behalf of his brother tars, and the battles they had fought, was as robust as his frame; and he surprised us with writing verses on the strength of it. Very good *heart* and *impart* verses they were too, and would cut as good a figure as any in the old magazines. While he read them, he rolled the r's in the most rugged style, and looked as if he could have run them down the throats of the enemy. The objects of his eulogy he called "our gallant *herroes*."

We took leave of Plymouth with a fine wind at north-east; and next day, on the confines of the Channel, spoke the *Two Sisters* of Guernsey, from Rio Janeiro. On a long voyage, ships lose their longitude; and our information enabled the vessel to enter the Channel with security. Ships approaching and parting from one another present a fine spectacle, shifting in the light, and almost looking conscious of the grace of their movements.

Sickness here began to prevail again among us, with all but myself, who am never sea-sick. I mention it in order to notice a pleasant piece of thanks which I received from my eldest boy, who, having suffered dreadfully in the former voyage, was grateful for my not having allowed him to eat butter in the interval. I know not whether my paternity is leading me here into too trifling a matter; but I mention the circumstance, because there may be intelligent children among my readers, with whom it may turn to account.

We were now on the high Atlantic, with fresh health and hopes, and the prospect of an easy voyage before us. Next night, the 15th, we saw, for the first time, two grampuses, who interested us extremely with their unwieldy gambols. They were very large,--in fact, a small kind of whale; but they played about the vessel like kittens, dashing round, and even under it, as if in scorn of its progress. The swiftness of fish is inconceivable. The smallest of them must be enormously strong: the largest are as gay as the least. One of these grampuses fairly sprang out of the water, bolt upright.

The same day, we were becalmed in the Bay of Biscay;—a pleasant surprise. A calm in the Bay of Biscay, after what we had read and heard of it, sounded to us like repose in a boiling cauldron. But a calm, after all, is not repose: it is a very unresting

and unpleasant thing, the ship taking a great gawky motion from side to side, as if playing the buffoon; and the sea heaving in huge oily-looking fields, like a carpet lifted. Sometimes it appears to be striped into great ribbons; but the sense of it is always more or less unpleasant, and to impatient seamen is torture.

The next day we were still becalmed. A small shark played all day long about the vessel, but was shy of the bait. The sea was swelling, and foul with putrid substances, which made us think what it would be if a calm continued a month. Coleridge has touched upon that matter, with the hand of a master, in his *Ancient Mariner*. (Here are three words in one sentence beginning with *m* and ending with *r*, to the great regret of fingers that cannot always stop to make corrections. But the compliment to Coleridge shall be the greater, since it is at my own expense.) During a calm, the seamen, that they may not be idle, are employed in painting the vessel:—an operation that does not look well, amidst the surrounding aspect of sickness and faintness. The favourite colours are black and yellow; I believe, because they are the least expensive. The combination is certainly the most ugly.

On the 17th, we had a fine breeze at north-east. There is great enjoyment in a beautiful day at sea. You quit all the discomforts of your situation for the

comforts; interchange congratulations with the seamen, who are all in good humour; seat yourself at ease on the deck, enjoy the motion, the getting on, the healthiness of the air; watch idly for new sights; read a little, or chat, or give way to a day-dream; then look up again, and expatiate on the basking scene around you, with its ripples of blue and green, or of green and gold,—what the old poet beautifully calls *the innumerable smile* of the waters.

"Ποντιων τε κυματων
Ανηριθμον γελασμα."
PROMETHEUS VINCTUS.

The appearance of another vessel sets conjecture alive: it is "a Dane," "a Frenchman," "a Portuguese," and these words have a new effect upon us, as though we suddenly became intimate with the country to which they belong. A more striking effect of the same sort is produced by the sight of a piece of land; it is Flamborough Head, Ushant, Cape Ortegal:—you see a part of another country, one perhaps on which you have never set foot; and even this is a great thing: it gives you an advantage; others have *read* of Spain or Portugal; you have *seen* it, and are a grown man and a traveller, compared with those little children of books. These novelties affect the dullest; but to persons of any imagination, and such as are ready for any pleasure or consolation that nature offers them, they are like pieces of a new

morning of life. The world seems begun again, and our stock of knowledge recommencing on a new plan.

Then at night-time, there are those beautiful fires on the water, by the vessel's side, upon the nature of which people seem hardly yet agreed. Some take them for animal decay, some for living animals, others for electricity. Perhaps all these causes have to do with it. In a fine blue sea, the foam caused by the ship at night seems full of stars. The white fermentation, with golden sparkles in it, is beautiful beyond conception. You look over the side of the vessel, and devour it with your eyes, as you would so much ethereal syllabub. Finally, the stars in the firmament issue forth, and the moon; always the more lovely the farther you get south. Or when there is no moon on the sea, the shadows at a little distance become grander and more solemn, and you watch for some huge fish to lift himself in the middle of them,—a darker mass, breathing and spouting water.

The fish appear very happy. Some are pursued indeed, and others pursue; there is a world of death as well as life going on. The mackerel avoids the porpoise, and the porpoise eschews the whale; there is the sword-fish, who runs a-muck; and the shark, the cruel scavenger. These are startling considerations; but it is impossible, on reflection, to separate the idea

of happiness from that of health and activity. The fishes are not sick or sophisticate; their blood is pure, their strength and agility prodigious; and a little peril, for aught we know, may serve to keep them moving, and give a relish to their vivacity. I looked upon the sea as a great tumbling wilderness, full of sport. To eat fish at sea, however, hardly looked fair, though it was the fairest of occasions: it seemed as if, not being an inhabitant, I had no right to the produce. I did not know how the dolphins might take it. At night-time, lying in a bed beneath the level of the water, I fancied sometimes that a fellow looked at me as he went by with his great side-long eyes, gaping objection. It was strange, I thought, to find oneself moving onward cheek by jowl with a porpoise, or yawning in concert with a shark.

On the 21st, after another two days of calm, and one of rain, we passed Cape Finisterre. There was a heavy swell and rolling. Being now on the Atlantic, with not even any other name for the part of it that we sailed over to interrupt the widest association of ideas, I thought of America, and Columbus, and the chivalrous squadrons that set out from Lisbon, and the old Atlantis of Plato, formerly supposed to exist off the coast of Portugal. It is curious, that the Portuguese have a tradition to this day, that there is an island occasionally seen off the

coast of Lisbon. The story of the Atlantis looks like some old immemorial tradition of a country that has really existed; nor is it difficult to suppose that there was formerly some great tract of land, or even continent, occupying these now watery regions, when we consider the fluctuation of things, and those changes of dry to moist, and of lofty to low, which are always taking place all over the globe. Off the coast of Cornwall, the mariner, it has been said, now rides over the old country of Lyones, or whatever else it was called, if that name be fabulous; and there are stories of doors and casements, and other evidences of occupation, brought up from the bottom. These, indeed, have lately been denied, or reduced to nothing: but old probabilities remain. In the eastern seas, the gigantic work of creation is visibly going on, by means of those little creatures, the coral worms; and new lands will as assuredly be inhabited there after a lapse of centuries, as old ones have vanished in the west.

"So, in them all, raignes mutabilitie."

22nd. Fine breeze to-day from the N.E. A great shark went by. One longs to give the fellow a great dig in the mouth. Yet he is only going "on his vocation." Without him, as without the vultures on land, something would be amiss. It is only moral pain and inequality which it is desirable to alter,—

that which the mind of man has an invincible tendency to alter.

To-day the seas reminded me of the "marmora pelagi," of Catullus (the "marbles of the ocean"). They looked, at a little distance, like blue water petrified. You might have supposed, that by some sudden catastrophe the mighty main had been turned into stone; and the huge animals, whose remains we find in it, fixed there for ever.

A shoal of porpoises broke up the fancy. Waves might be classed, as clouds have been; and more determination given to pictures of them. We ought to have waves and wavelets, billows, fluctuosities, &c., a marble sea, a sea weltering. The sea varies its look at the immediate side of the vessel, according as the progress is swift or slow. Sometimes it is a crisp and rapid flight, hissing; sometimes an interweaving of the foam in snake-like characters; sometimes a heavy weltering, shouldering the ship on this side and that. In what is called "the trough of the sea," which is a common state to be in during violent weather, the vessel literally appears stuck and labouring in a trough, the sea looking on either side like a hill of yeast. This was the gentlest sight we used to have in the Channel; very different from our summer amenities. I never saw what are called waves "mountains high." It is a figure of speech; and a very violent one.

A fine breeze all night, with many porpoises. Porpoises are supposed to portend a change of weather, bad or good: they are not prognosticators of bad alone. At night there was a "young May moon," skimming between the dark clouds, like a boat of silver. I was upon deck, and found the watcher asleep. A vessel might have tipped us all into the water, for anything that he knew, or perhaps cared. There ought to be watchers on board ship, exclusively for that office. It is not to be expected that sailors, who have been at work all day, should not sleep at night, especially out in the air. It is as natural to these children of the sea, as to infants carried out of doors. The sleeper in the present instance had had a pail thrown over him one night, which only put him in a rage, and perhaps made him sleep out of spite next time. He was a strong, hearty, Welsh lad, healthy and good-looking, in whose veins life coursed it so happily, that, in order to put him on a par with less fortunate constitutions, fate seemed to have brought about a state of warfare between him and the captain, who thought it necessary to be always giving him the rope's end. Poor John used to dance and roar with the sting of it, and take care to deserve it better next time. He was unquestionably "very aggravating," as the saying is; but, on the other hand, the rope was not a little provoking.

23rd. A strong breeze from the N. and N.E., with clouds and rain. The foam by the vessel's side was full of those sparkles I have mentioned, like stars in clouds of froth. On the 24th, the breeze increased, but the sky was fairer, and the moon gave a light. We drank the health of a friend in England, whose birthday it was; being great observers of that part of religion. The 25th brought us beautiful weather, with a wind right from the north, so that we ran down the remainder of the coast of Portugal in high style. Just as we desired it, too, it changed to N.W., so as to enable us to turn the Strait of Gibraltar merrily. Cape St. Vincent (where the battle took place), just before you come to Gibraltar, is a beautiful lone promontory jutting out upon the sea, and crowned with a convent. It presented itself to my eyes the first thing when I came upon deck in the morning, — clear, solitary, blind-looking; feeling, as it were, the sea air and the solitude for ever, like something between stone and spirit. It reminded me of a couplet, written not long before, of

> "Ghastly castle, that eternally
> Holds its blind visage out to the lone sea."

Such things are beheld in one's day-dreams, and we are almost startled to find them real.

Between the Cape and Gibraltar were some fishermen, ten or twelve in a boat, fishing with a singular

dancing motion of the line. These were the first "Southrons" we had seen in their own domain; and they interested us accordingly. One man took off his cap. In return for this politeness, the sailors joked them in bad Portuguese, and shouted with laughter at the odd sound of their language when they replied. A seaman, within his ship and his limited horizon, thinks he contains the whole circle of knowledge. Whatever gives him a hint of anything else, he looks upon as absurdity; and is the first to laugh at his own ignorance, without knowing it, in another shape. That a Portuguese should not be able to speak English, appears to him the most ludicrous thing in the world; while, on his part, he affects to think it a condescension to speak a few rascally words of Portuguese, though he is in reality very proud of them. The more ignorance and inability, the more pride and intolerance! A servant-maid whom we took with us to Italy, could not "abide" the disagreeable sound of Tuscan, and professed to change the word *grazie* into *grochy*, because it was prettier.

All this corner of the Peninsula is rich in ancient and modern interest. There is Cape St. Vincent, just mentioned; Trafalgar, more illustrious; Cadiz, the city of Geryon; Gibraltar, and the other pillar of Hercules; Atlantis, Plato's Island, which he puts hereabouts; and the Fortunate Islands, Elysian

Fields, or Gardens of the Hesperides, which, under different appellations, and often confounded with one another, lay in this part of the Atlantic, according to Pliny. Here, also, if we are to take Dante's word for it, Ulysses found a grave, not unworthy of his life in the *Odyssey*. Milton ought to have come this way from Italy, instead of twice going through France. He would have found himself in a world of poetry, the unaccustomed grandeur of the sea keeping it in its original freshness, unspoilt by the commonplaces that beset us on shore; and his descriptions would have been still finer for it. It is observable, that Milton does not deal much in descriptions of the ocean, a very epic part of poetry. He has been at Homer and Apollonius, more than at sea. In one instance, he is content with giving us an ancient phrase in one-half of his line, and a translation of it in the other:—

"On the clear hyaline,—the glassy sea."

The best describer of the sea, among our English poets, is Spenser, who was conversant with the Irish Channel. Shakspeare, for an inland poet, is wonderful; but his astonishing sympathy with everything, animate and inanimate, made him lord of the universe, without stirring from his seat. Nature brought her shows to him like a servant, and drew back for his eye the curtains of time and place. Mil-

ton and Dante speak of the ocean as of a great plain. Shakspeare talks as if he had ridden upon it, and felt its unceasing motion.

"The *still-vext* Bermoothes."

What a *presence* is there in that epithet! He draws a rocky island with its waters about it, as if he had lived there all his life; and he was the first among our dramatists to paint a sailor,—as he was to lead the way in those national caricatures of Frenchmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen.

"You by whose aid,"

says Prospero,—

"Weak masters though ye be, I have be-dimm'd
The noon-tide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring war."

He could not have said it better, had he been buffeted with all the blinding and shrieking of a Channel storm. As to Spenser, see his comparisons of "billows in the Irish sounds;" his

"World of waters, wide and deep,"

in the first book,—much better than "the ocean floor" (*suol marino*) of Dante; and all the sea-pictures, both fair and stormy, in the wonderful twelfth canto of Book the Second, with its fabulous ichthyology, part of which I must quote here for

the pleasure of poetical readers: for the seas ought not to be traversed without adverting to these other shapes of their terrors—

"All dreadfull pourtraicts of deformitie;
Spring-headed hydras, and *sea-shouldering* whales;
Great whirle-pooles which all fishes make to flee;
Bright scolopendras, arm'd with silver scales;
Mighty monoceros with immeasured tayles.*
The dreadfull fish that hath *deserved* the name
Of Death, and like him looks in dreadfull hew;
The griesly wasserman, that makes his game
The flying ships with swiftness to pursew;
The horrible sea-satyre, that doth shew
His fearefull face in time of greatest storm;
Huge ziffius, whom mariners eschew
No less than rocks, as travellers informe;

(How he loads his verses with a weight of apprehension, as if it was all real!)

And greedy rosmarines, with visages deforme.

"All these, and thousand thousands many more,
And more deformèd monsters, thousand-fold,
With dreadfull noise and hollow rumbling rore
Came rushing, in the fomy waves enroll'd,
Which seem'd to fly, for feare them to behold.
No wonder if these did the knight appall:
For all that here on earth we dreadfull hold,
Be but as bugs to fearen babes withall,
Comparèd to the creatures in the sea's enthràll."

* This is the *smisurato* of the Italians. In the *Orlando Innamorato* somebody comes riding on a *smisurato cavallone*, an immeasurable horse.

Five *dreadfulls* in the course of three stanzas, and not one too many, any more than if a believing child were talking to us.

Gibraltar has a noble look, tall, hard, and independent. But you do not wish to live there:—it is a fortress, and an insulated rock; and such a place is but a prison. The inhabitants feed luxuriously, with the help of their fruits and smugglers.

The first sight of Africa is an achievement. Voyagers in our situation are obliged to be content with a mere sight of it; but that is much. They have seen another quarter of the globe. "Africa!" They look at it, and repeat the word, till the whole burning and savage territory, with its black inhabitants and its lions, seems put into their possession. Ceuta and Tangier bring the old Moorish times before you; "Ape's Hill," which is pointed out, sounds fantastic and remote, "a wilderness of monkeys;" and as all shores on which you do not clearly distinguish objects have a solemn and romantic look, you get rid of the petty effect of those vagabond Barbary States that occupy the coast, and think at once of Africa, the country of deserts and wild beasts, the "dry-nurse of lions," as Horace, with a vigour beyond himself, calls it.

At Gibraltar you first have a convincing proof of the rarity of the southern atmosphere, in the near

look of the Straits, which seem but a few miles across, though they are thirteen.

But what a crowd of thoughts face one on entering the Mediterranean! Grand as the sensation is in passing through the classical and romantic memories of the sea off the western coast of the Peninsula, it is little compared with this. Countless generations of the human race, from three quarters of the world, with all the religions, and the mythologies, and the genius, and the wonderful deeds, good and bad, that have occupied almost the whole attention of mankind, look you in the face from the galleries of that ocean-floor, rising one above another, till the tops are lost in heaven. The water at your feet is the same water that bathes the shores of Europe, of Africa, and of Asia,—of Italy and Greece, and the Holy Land, and the lands of chivalry and romance, and pastoral Sicily, and the Pyramids, and old Crete, and the Arabian city of Al Cairo, glittering in the magic lustre of the Thousand and One Nights. This soft air in your face comes from the grove of "Daphne by Orontes;" these lucid waters, that part from before you like oil, are the same from which Venus arose, pressing them out of her hair. In that quarter Vulcan fell—

"Dropt from the zenith like a falling star:"

and there is Circe's Island, and Calypso's, and the

promontory of Plato, and Ulysses wandering, and Cymon and Miltiades fighting, and Regulus crossing the sea to Carthage, and

> "Damasco and Morocco, and Trebisond;
> And whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
> When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
> By Fontarabbia."

The mind hardly separates truth from fiction in thinking of all these things, nor does it wish to do so. Fiction is Truth in another shape, and gives as close embraces. You may shut a door upon a ruby, and render it of no colour; but the colour shall not be the less enchanting for that, when the sun, the poet of the world, touches it with his golden pen. What we glow at and shed tears over, is as real as love and pity.

At night the moon arose in a perfection of serenity, and restored the scene to the present moment. I could not help thinking, however, of Anacreon (poets are of all moments), and fancying some connection with moonlight in the very sound of that beautiful verse in which he speaks of the vernal softness of the waves:—

> "Apalùnetai galènè."

I write the verse in English characters, that every reader may taste it.

All our Greek beauties why should schools engross?

I used to feel grateful to Fielding and Smollett, when a boy, for writing their Greek in English. It is like catching a bit of a beautiful song, though one does not know the words.

27th. Almost a calm. We proceeded at no greater rate than a mile an hour. I kept repeating to myself the word "Mediterranean;" not the word in prose, but the word in verse, as it stands at the beginning of the line:

"And the sea
Mediterranean."

We saw the mountains about Malaga, topped with snow. Velez Malaga is probably the place at which Cervantes landed on his return from captivity at Algiers. (See *Don Quixote*, vol. ii.) I had the pleasure of reading the passage, while crossing the line betwixt the two cities. It is something to sail by the very names of Granada and Andalusia. There was a fine sunset over the hills of Granada. I imagined it lighting up the Alhambra. The clouds were like great wings of gold and yellow and rose-colour, with a smaller minute sprinkle in one spot, like a shower of glowing stones from a volcano. You see very faint imitations of such lustre in England. A heavy dew succeeded; and a contrary wind at south-east, but very mild. At night, the reflection of the moon on the water was like silver snakes.

We had contrary winds for several days in suc-

cession, but nothing to signify after our winter. On the 28th we saw a fire at night on the coast of Granada, and similar lights on the hills. The former was, perhaps, made by smugglers; the latter, in burning charcoal or heath. A gull came to us next day, hanging in the air, like the dove in the picture, a few yards' distance from the trysail, and occasionally dipping in the water for fish. It had a small head, and long beak, like a snipe's; wings tipped with black. It reminded us of Coleridge's poem; which my eldest boy, in the teeth of his father's rhymes, had the impudence to think the finest poem in the world. We may say of the *Ancient Mariner*, what is only to be said of the very finest poems, that it is equally calculated to please the imaginations of the most childlike boy and the profoundest man; extremes, which meet in those superhuman places; and superhuman, in a sense exquisitely human, as well as visionary. I believe Coleridge's young admirer would have been as much terrified at shooting this albatross, as the one the poet speaks of; not to mention that he could not be quite sure it was a different one.

30th. Passed Cape de Gata. My wife was very ill, but observed that illness itself was not illness, compared to what she experienced in the winter voyage. She never complained, summer or winter. It is very distressing not to be able to give perfect

comfort to patients of this generous description. The Mediterranean Sea, after the Channel, was like a bason of gold fish; but when the winds are contrary, the waves of it have a short uneasy motion, that fidget the vessel, and make one long for the nobler billows of the Atlantic. The wind, too, was singularly unpleasant,—moist and feverish. It continued contrary for several days, but became more agreeable, and sank almost into a calm on the 3rd of June. It is difficult for people on shore, in spite of their geographical knowledge, not to suppose that the view is very extensive at sea. Intermediate objects being out of the way, and the fancy taking wing like the dove of Noah, they imagine the "ocean-floor," as the poets call it, extending itself interminably all round, or bounded by an enormous horizon; whereas, the stretch of vision is limited to a distance of about seven miles, and the uninterrupted concave of the horizon, completes the look of enclosure and limitation. A man on the top of a moderate hill may see four or five times as far as from the mainmast of a man-of-war. In the thin atmosphere of the south, the horizon appears to be still more circumscribed. You seem to have but a very few miles around you, and can hardly help fancying that the sea is on a miniature scale, proportioned to the delicacy of its behaviour.

On the day above mentioned, we saw the land

between Cape St. Martin and Alicant. The coast hereabouts is all of the same rude and gray character. From this night to the next it was almost a calm, when a more favourable wind sprang up at east-south-east. The books with which I chiefly amused myself in the Mediterranean, were *Don Quixote* (for reasons which will be obvious to the reader), *Ariosto* and *Berni* (for similar reasons, their heroes having to do with the coasts of France and Africa), and Bayle's admirable *Essay on Comets*, which I picked up at Plymouth. It is the book that put an end to the superstition about comets. It is full of amusement, like all his dialectics; and holds together a perfect chain-armour of logic, the handler of which may cut his fingers with it at every turn, almost every link containing a double edge. A generation succeeds quietly to the good done it by such works, and its benefactor's name is sunk in the washy pretensions of those whom he has enriched. As to what seems defective in Bayle on the score of natural piety, the reader may supply that. A benevolent work, tending to do away real dishonour to things supernatural, will be no hinderance to any benevolent addition which others can bring it; nor would Bayle, with his good-natured face, and the scholarly simplicity of his life, have found fault with it. But he was a soldier, after his fashion, with qualities, both positive and negative, fit to keep him

one; and some things must be dispensed with on the side of what is desirable, for the sake of the part that is taken in the overthrow of what is detestable. Him whom inquisitors hate, angels may love.

All day, on the 5th, we were off the island of Yvica. The wind was contrary again till evening. Yvica was about ten miles off, when nearest. It has a barren look, with its rock in front. Spain was in sight; before and beyond, Cape St. Martin. The high land of Spain above the clouds had a look really mountainous. After having the sea to ourselves for a long while, we saw a vessel in our own situation, beating to wind and tide. Sympathy is sometimes cruel as well as kind. One likes to have a companion in misfortune. At night fell a calm.

6th. It was a grand thing this evening, to see on one side of us the sunset, and on the other side, *night-time*, already on the sea. "Ruit oceano nox" (night rushes on the sea). It is not true that there is no twilight in the south, but it is very brief. Before the day is finished on one side, night is on the other. You turn and behold it unexpectedly—a black shade that fills one end of the horizon, and seems at once brooding and coming on. One sight like this, to a Hesiod or a Thales, is sufficient to fill poetry for ever with those images of brooding, and of raven wings, and the birth of Chaos, which are associated with the mythological idea of night.

To-day we hailed a ship bound for Nice, which would not tell us the country she came from. Questions put by one vessel to another are frequently refused an answer, for reasons of knavery or policy. It was curious to hear our rough and informal captain speaking through his trumpet with all the precision and loud gravity of a preacher. There is a formula in use on these occasions that has an old scriptural effect. A ship descried, appears to the sailors like a friend visiting them in prison. All hands are interested: all eyes turn to the same quarter; the business of the vessel is suspended; and such as have licence to do so, crowd on the gangway; the captain, with an air of dignity, having his trumpet brought him. You think that "What cheer, ho?" is to follow, or, "Well, my lads, who are you? and where are you going?" Not so; the captain applies his mouth with a pomp of preparation, and you are startled with the following primitive shouts, all uttered in a high formal tone, with due intervals between, as if a Calvinistic Stentor were questioning a man from the land of Goshen:—

"What is your name?"
"Whence come you?"
"Whither are you bound?"

After the question "What is your name?" all ears are bent to listen. The answer comes, high and remote, nothing, perhaps, being distinguished of it but

the vowels. The "Sall-of-Hym," you must translate into the *Sally* of Plymouth.

"Whence come you?" All ears bent again. "Myr" or "Mau," is Smyrna or Malta.

"Whither are you bound?" All ears again. No answer. "D—d if he'll tell," cries the captain, laying down at once his trumpet and his scripture.

7th. Saw the Colombrettes, and the land about Tortosa. Here commences the ground of Italian romance. It was on this part of the west of Spain, that the Paynim chivalry used to land, to go against Charlemagne. Here Orlando played him the tricks that got him the title of Furioso; and from the port of Barcelona, Angelica and Medoro took ship for her dominion of Cathay. I confess I looked at these shores with a human interest, and could not help fancying that the keel of our vessel was crossing a real line, over which knights and lovers had passed. And so they have, both real and fabulous; the former not less romantic, the latter scarcely less real; to thousands, indeed, much more so; for who knows not of hundreds of real men and women that have crossed these waters, and suffered actual passion on those shores and hills? And who knows not Orlando and all the hard blows he gave, and the harder blow than all given him by two happy lovers; and the lovers themselves, the representatives of all the young love that ever was. I had a grudge of my own against

Angelica, looking upon myself as jilted by those fine eyes which the painter has given her in the English picture; for I took her for a more sentimental person; but I excused her, seeing her beset and tormented by all those knights, who thought they earned a right to her by hacking and hewing; and I more than pardoned her, when I found that Medoro, besides being young and handsome, was a friend and a devoted follower. But what of that? They were both young and handsome; and love, at that time of life, goes upon no other merits, taking all the rest upon trust in the generosity of its wealth, and as willing to bestow a throne as a ribbon, to show the all-sufficiency of its contentment. Fair speed your sails over the lucid waters, ye lovers, on a lover-like sea! Fair speed them, yet never land; for where the poet has left you, there ought ye, as ye are, to be living for ever—for ever gliding about a summer-sea, touching at its flowery islands, and reposing beneath its moan.

The blueness of the water about these parts was excessive, especially in the shade next the vessel's side. The gloss of the sunshine was there taken off, and the colour was exactly that of the bottles sold in the shops with gold stoppers. In the shadows caused by the more transparent medium of the sails, an exquisite radiance was thrown up, like light struck out of a great precious stone. These colours, con-

trasted with the yellow of the horizon at sunset, formed one of those spectacles of beauty, which it is difficult to believe not intended to delight many more spectators than can witness them with human eyes. Earth and sea are full of gorgeous pictures, which seem made for a nobler and certainly a more numerous admiration than is found among ourselves. Individuals may roam the loveliest country for a summer's day, and hardly meet a person bound on the same enjoyment as themselves. Does human nature flatter itself that all this beauty was made for its dull and absent eyes, gone elsewhere to poke about for pence? Or, if so, is there not to be discerned in it a new and religious reason for being more alive to the wholesome riches of nature, and less to those carking cares and unneighbourly emulations of cities?

8th. Calm till evening, when a fairer wind arose, which continued all night. There was a divine sunset over the mouth of the Ebro,—majestic, dark-embattled clouds, with an intense sun venting itself above and below like a Shekinah, and the rest of the heaven covered with large *flights* of little burnished and white clouds. It was what is called in England a mackerel sky,—an appellation which may serve to show how inferior it is to a sky of the same mottled description in the south. All colours in the north are comparatively cold and fishy. You have only to see a red cap under a Mediterranean sun, to be con-

vinced that our painters will never emulate those of Italy as our poets have done. They are birds of a different clime, and are modified accordingly. They do not live upon the same lustrous food; therefore will never show it in their plumage. Poetry is the internal part, or sentiment, of what is material; and therefore, our thoughts being driven inwards, and rendered imaginative by these very defects of climate which discolour to us the external world, we have had among us some of the greatest poets that ever existed. It is observable, that the greatest poets of Italy came from Tuscany, where there is a great deal of inclemency in the seasons. The painters were from Venice, Rome, and other quarters; some of which, though more northern, are more genially situated. The hills about Florence made Petrarch and Dante well acquainted with winter; and they were also travellers, and unfortunate. These are mighty helps to reflection. Titian and Raphael had nothing to do but to paint under a blue sky half the day, and play with their mistress's locks all the rest of it. Let a painter in cloudy and bill-broking England do this if he can.

9th. Completely fair wind at south-west. Saw Montserrat. The sunshine, reflected on the water from the lee studding-sail, was like shot silk. At half-past seven in the evening, night was risen in the east, while the sun was setting opposite. "Black

night has come up already," said our poetical captain. A fair breeze all night and all next day, took us on at the rate of about five miles an hour, very refreshing after the calms and foul winds. We passed the Gulf of Lyons still more pleasantly than we did the Bay of Biscay, for in the latter there was a calm. In both of these places, a little rough handling is generally looked for. A hawk settled on the main-yard, and peered about the birdless main.

11th. Light airs not quite fair, till noon, when they returned and were somewhat stronger. (I am thus particular in my daily notices, both to complete the reader's sense of the truth of my narrative, and to give him the benefit of them in case he goes the same road.) The land about Toulon was now visible, and then the Hieres Islands, a French paradise of oranges and sweet airs—

"Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles."

The perfume exhaling from these and other flowery coasts is no fable, as every one knows who has passed Gibraltar and the coast of Genoa. M. le Franc de Pompignan, in some verses of the commonest French manufacture, tells us, with respect to the Hieres Islands, that Vertumnus, Pomona, Zephyr, &c. "reign there always," and that the place is "the asylum of their loves, and the throne of their empire." Very private and public!

"Vertumne, Pomone, Zéphyre
Avec Flore y règnent toujours;
C'est l'asyle de leurs amours,
Et le trone de leur empire."

It was the coast of Provence we were now looking upon, the land of the Troubadours. It seemed but a short cut over to Tripoli, where Geoffrey Rudel went to look upon his mistress and die. But our attention was called off by a less romantic spectacle, a sight unpleasant to an Englishman,—the *union* flag of Genoa and Sardinia hoisted on a boat. An independent flag of any kind is something; a good old battered and conquered one is much; but this bit of the Holy Alliance livery, patched up among his brother servants by poor Lord Castlereagh, and making its bow in the very seas where Andrew Doria feasted an emperor and refused a sovereignty, was a baulk of a very melancholy kind of burlesque. The Sardinian was returning with empty wine casks from the French coast; a cargo which, at the hour of day when we saw it, probably bore the liveliest possible resemblance to the heads whom he served. The wind fell in the evening, and there was a dead calm all night. At eleven o'clock, a grampus was heard breathing very hard, but we could not see it on account of the mists, the only ones we had experienced in the Mediterranean. These sounds of great fish in the night-time are very imposing, the

creature displacing a world of water about it, as it dips and rises at intervals on its billowy path.

12th. During the night we must have crossed the path which Bonaparte took to Antibes from Elba. We went over it as unconsciously as he now travels round with the globe in his long sleep. Talking with the captain to-day, I learned that his kindred and he monopolize the whole employment of his owner, and that his father served in it thirty-three years out of fifty. There is always something respectable in continuity and duration. If this family should continue to be masters and conductors of vessels for two or three generations, more especially in the same interest, they will have a sort of moral pedigree to show, far beyond those of many proud families, who do nothing at all because their ancestors did something a hundred years back.

I will here set down a memorandum, with regard to vessels, which may be useful. The one we sailed in was marked A. 1, in the shipping list: that is to say, it stood in the first rank of sea-worthy vessels; and it is in vessels of this class that people are always anxious to sail. In the present instance, the ship was worthy of the rank it bore; so was the one we buffeted the Channel in; or it would not have held out. But this mark of prime worthiness, A. 1, a vessel is allowed to retain only ten years; the consequence of which is, that many ships are built to

last only that time; and goods and lives are often entrusted to a weak vessel, instead of one which, though twice as old, is in twice as good condition. The best way is to get a friend who knows something of the matter, to make inquiries; and the seaworthiness of the captain himself, his standing with his employers, &c., might as well be added to the list.

13th. The ALPS! It was the first time I had seen mountains. They had a fine sulky look, up aloft in the sky,—cold, lofty, and distant. I used to think that mountains would impress me but little; that by the same process of imagination reversed, by which a brook can be fancied a mighty river, with forests instead of verdure on its banks, a mountain could be made a mole-hill, over which we step. But one look convinced me to the contrary. I found I could elevate, better than I could pull down; and I was glad of it. It was not that the sight of the Alps was necessary to convince me of "the being of a God," as it is said to have done somebody, or to put me upon any reflections respecting infinity and first causes, of which I have had enough in my time; but I seemed to meet for the first time a grand poetical thought in a material shape,—to see a piece of one's book-wonders realized,—something very earthly, yet standing between earth and heaven, like a piece of the antediluvian world looking out of the coldness of

ages. I remember reading in a Review a passage from some book of travels, which spoke of the author standing on the sea-shore, and being led by the silence and the abstraction, and the novel grandeur of the objects around him, to think of the earth, not in its geographical relations, but as a planet in connection with other planets, and rolling in the immensity of space. With these thoughts I have been familiar, as I suppose every one has been who knows what solitude is, and has an imagination, and perhaps not the best health. But we grow used to the mightiest aspects of thought, as we do to the immortal visages of the moon and stars: and therefore the first sight of the Alps, though much less things than any of these, and a toy, as I had fancied, for imagination to recreate itself with after their company, startles us like the disproof of a doubt, or the verification of an early dream,—a ghost, as it were, made visible by daylight, and giving us an enormous sense of its presence and materiality.

In the course of the day, we saw the tableland about Monaco. It brought to my mind the ludicrous distress of the petty prince of that place, when on his return from interchanging congratulations with his new masters and the legitimates, he suddenly met his old master, Napoleon, on his return from Elba. Or did he meet him when going to Elba? 'I forget which;' but the distresses and con-

fusion of the prince were at all events as certain as the superiority and amusement of the great man. In either case, this was the natural division of things, and the circumstances would have been the same. A large grampus went by, heaping the water into clouds of foam. Another time, we saw a shark with his fin above water, which, I believe, is his constant way of going. The Alps were now fully and closely seen, and a glorious sunset took place. There was the greatest grandeur and the loveliest beauty. Among others was a small string of clouds, like rubies with facets, a very dark tinge being put here and there, as if by a painter, to set off the rest. Red is certainly the colour of beauty, and ruby the most beautiful of reds. It was in no commonplace spirit that Marlowe, in his list of precious stones, called them "beauteous rubies," but with exquisite gusto:

> "Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
> Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,
> *Beauteous* rubies, sparkling diamonds," &c.

They come upon you, among the rest, like the women of gems. All these colours we had about us in our Mediterranean sunsets; and as if fortune would add to them by a freak of fancy, a little shoal of fish, sparkling as silver, leaped out of the water this afternoon, like a sprinkle of shillings. They were the anchovies, or Sardinias, that we eat. They give a

burlesque title to the sovereign of these seas, whom the Tuscans call "King of the Sardinias."

We were now sailing up the angle of the Gulf of Genoa, its shore looking as Italian as possible, with groves and white villages. The names, too, were alluring,—Oneglia, Albenga, Savona; the last, the birthplace of a sprightly poet (Frugoni), whose works I was acquainted with. The breeze was the strongest we had had yet, and not quite fair, but we made good head against it; the queen-like city of Genoa, crowned with white palaces, sat at the end of the gulf, as if to receive us in state; and at two o'clock, the waters being as blue as the sky, and all hearts rejoicing, we entered our Italian harbour, and heard Italian words.

Luckily for us, these first words were Tuscan. A pilot boat came out. Somebody asked a question which we did not hear, and the captain replied to it. "VA BENE," said the pilot, in a fine open voice, and turned the head of the boat with a tranquil dignity. "Va bene," thought I, indeed. "All goes well" truly. The words are delicious, and the omen good. My family have arrived so far in safety; we have but a little more voyage to make, a few steps to measure back in this calm Mediterranean; the weather is glorious; Italy looks like what we expected; in a day or two we shall hear of our friends: health and peace are before

us, pleasure to others and profit to ourselves; and it is hard if we do not enjoy again, before long, the society of all our friends, both abroad and at home. In a day or two we received a letter from Shelley, saying that winds and waves, he hoped, would never part us more.—Alas! for that saying.

In the harbour of Genoa, we lay next a fine American vessel, the captain of which, I thought, played the great man in a style beyond anything I had seen in our English merchantmen. On the other side of us, was an Englishman, as fragile as the other was stout built. Yet the captain, with a dialect more uncouth than any of us had heard, talked of its weathering the last winter capitally, and professed not to care anything for a gale of wind, which he called a "gal o' wined." We here met with our winter vessel, looking as gay and summery as possible, and having an awning stretched over the deck, under which the captain invited us to dine. I went and had the pleasure of meeting our friend the mate, and a good-natured countryman, residing at Genoa, who talked much of a French priest whom he knew, and whom he called "the prate" (*prêtre*). Our former companions, in completing their voyage, had had a bad time of it in the Gulf of Lyons, during which the ship was under water, the cook-house and bulwarks, &c., carried away, and the men obliged to be taken aft

into the cabin two nights together." We had reason to bless ourselves that my wife was not there; for this would infallibly have put an end to her.

On the 28th of June, we set sail for Leghorn. The weather was still as fine as possible, and our concluding trip as agreeable; with the exception of a storm of thunder and lightning one night, which was the completest I ever saw. Our newspaper friend, "the oldest man living," ought to have been there to see it. The lightning fell in all parts of the sea, like pillars; or like great melted fires, suddenly dropped from a giant torch. Now it pierced the sea like rods; now fell like enormous flakes or tongues, suddenly swallowed up. At one time, it seemed to confine itself to a dark corner of the ocean, making formidable shows of gigantic and flashing lances (for it was the most perpendicular lightning I ever saw): then it dashed broadly at the whole sea, as if it would sweep us away in flame; and then came in random portions about the vessel, treading the waves hither and thither, like the legs of fiery spirits descending in wrath.

I now had a specimen (and confess I was not sorry to see it) of the fear which could enter even into the hearts of our "gallant heroes," when thrown into an unusual situation. The captain, almost the only man unmoved, or apparently so (and I really believe he was as fearless on all occasions, as his

native valour, to say nothing of his brandy and water, could make him), was so exasperated with the alarm depicted in the faces of some of his crew, that he dashed his hand contemptuously at the poor fellow at the helm, and called him a coward. For our parts, having no fear of thunder and lightning, and not being fully aware perhaps of the danger to which vessels are exposed on these occasions, particularly if, like our Channel friend, they carry gunpowder (as most of them do, more or less), we were quite at our ease compared with our inexperienced friends about us, who had never witnessed anything of the like before even in books. Besides, we thought it impossible for the Mediterranean to play us any serious trick,—that sunny and lucid basin, which we had beheld only in its contrast with a northern and a winter sea. Little did we think, that in so short a space of time, and somewhere about this very spot, a catastrophe would take place, that should put an end to all sweet thoughts, both of the Mediterranean and the south.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RETURN TO FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH LORD BYRON AND THOMAS MOORE.

First sight of Lord Byron.—Jackson the prize-fighter.—Bathing at Westminster.—Sympathy with early poems.—More prison recollections.—Lord Byron and the House of Peers.—Thomas Moore and the Liberal.—*Mistaken conclusions of his.—His appearance, manners, and opinions.—Letters of Lord Byron.*

Lord Byron was at Leghorn; the bad weather has disappeared; the vessel is about to enter port; and as everything concerning the noble lord is interesting, and the like may be said of his brother wit and poet, Thomas Moore, who introduced me to him, I will take this opportunity of doing what had better, perhaps, been done when I first made his lordship's acquaintance; namely, state when it was that I first *saw* the one, and how I became acquainted with the other. My intimacy with Lord Byron is about to become closer; the results of it are connected both with him and his friend, and as these results are on the eve of commencing, my own

interest in the subject is strengthened, and I call things to mind which I had suffered to escape me.

The first time I saw Lord Byron, he was rehearsing the part of Leander, under the auspices of Mr. Jackson the prize-fighter. It was in the river Thames, before he went to Greece. There used to be a bathing-machine stationed on the eastern side of Westminster Bridge; and I had been bathing, and was standing on this machine adjusting my clothes, when I noticed a respectable-looking manly person, who was eyeing something at a distance. This was Mr. Jackson waiting for his pupil. The latter was swimming with somebody for a wager. I forgot what his tutor said of him; but he spoke in terms of praise. I saw nothing in Lord Byron at that time, but a young man who, like myself, had written a bad volume of poems; and though I had a sympathy with him on this account, and more respect for his rank than I was willing to suppose, my sympathy was not an agreeable one; so, contenting myself with seeing his lordship's head bob up and down in the water, like a buoy, I came away.

Lord Byron, when he afterwards came to see me in prison, was pleased to regret that I had not stayed. He told me, that the sight of my volume at Harrow had been one of his incentives to write verses, and that he had had the same passion for friendship which I had displayed in it. To my

astonishment he quoted some of the lines, and would not hear me speak ill of them. His harbinger in the visit was Moore. Moore told me, that, besides liking my politics, his lordship liked the *Feast of the Poets*, and would be glad to make my acquaintance. I said I felt myself highly flattered, and should be proud to entertain his lordship as well as a poor patriot could. He was accordingly invited to dinner. His friend only stipulated that there should be "fish and vegetables for the noble bard;" his lordship at that time being anti-carnivorous in his eating. He came, and we passed a very pleasant afternoon, talking of books, and school, and of their friend and brother poet the late Rev. Mr. Bowles; whose sonnets were among the early inspirations of Coleridge.

Lord Byron, as the reader has seen, subsequently called on me in the prison several times. He used to bring books for the *Story of Rimini*, which I was then writing. He would not let the footman bring them in. He would enter with a couple of quartos under his arm; and give you to understand that he was prouder of being a friend and a man of letters, than a lord. It was thus that by flattering one's vanity he persuaded us of his own freedom from it; for he could see very well that I had more value for lords than I supposed.

In the correspondence which closes the present

volume, the reader will find some letters addressed to me at this period by Lord Byron. The noble poet was a warm politician, earnest in the cause of liberty. His failure in the House of Lords is well known. He was very candid about it; said he was much frightened, and should never be able to do anything that way. Lords of all parties came about him, and consoled him. He particularly mentioned Lord Sidmouth, as being unexpectedly kind.

It was very pleasant to see Lord Byron and Moore together. They harmonized admirably: though their knowledge of one another began in talking of a duel, in consequence of his lordship attacking the license of certain early verses. Moore's acquaintance with myself (as far as concerned correspondence by letter), originated in the mention of him in the *Feast of the Poets*. He subsequently wrote an opera, called the *Blue Stocking*, respecting which he sent me a letter, at once deprecating and warranting objection to it. I was then editor of the *Examiner*; I did object to it, though with all acknowledgment of his genius. He came to see me, saying I was very much in the right; and an intercourse took place, which was never ostensibly interrupted till I thought myself aggrieved by his opposition to the periodical work proposed to me by his noble friend. I say "thought myself aggrieved," because I have long since acquitted him of any intention

towards me, more hostile than that of zeal in behalf of what he supposed best for his lordship. He was desirous of preventing him from coming before the Tory critics under a new and irritating aspect, at a time when it might be considered prudent to keep quiet, and propitiate objections already existing. The only thing which remained for me to complain of, was his not telling me so frankly; for this would have been a confidence which I deserved; and it would either have made me, of my own accord, object to the project at once, without the least hesitation, or, at all events, have been met by me with such a hearty sense of the plain dealing, and in so friendly a spirit of difference, that no ill-will, I think, could have remained on either side. Moore, at least, was of too generous a spirit for it; and I was of too grateful a one.

Unfortunately, this plan was not adopted by his lordship's friends; and hence a series of bitter feelings on both sides, which, as I was the first to express them, so I did not hesitate to be the first to regret publicly, when on both sides they had tacitly been done away.

Moore fancied, among other things, that I meant to pain him by speaking of his small stature; and perhaps it was wrong to hazard a remark on so delicate a subject, however inoffensively meant; especially as it led to other personal characteristics, which might

have seemed of less doubtful intention. But I felt only a painter's pleasure in taking the portrait; and I flattered myself that, as far as externals went, I abundantly evinced my good-will, not only by doing justice to all that was handsome and poetical in his aspect, and by noticing the beauty reported of his childhood, but by the things which I said of the greatness observable in so many little men in history, especially as recorded by Clarendon. In fact, this had been such a favourite subject with me, that some journalists concluded I must be short myself, which, I am bound to say, is not the case. Men of great action, I suspect, including the most heroical soldiers, have been for the most part of short stature, from the fabulous Tydeus, to Alexander and Agesilaus, and so downwards to Wellington and Napoleon. Nor have sages and poets, or any kind of genius, been wanting to the list; from the ancient philosopher who was obliged to carry lead in his pockets lest he should be blown away, down to Michael Angelo, and Montaigne, and Barrow, and Spenser himself, and the Falklands and Haleses of Clarendon, and Pope, and Steele, and Reynolds, and Mozart.

Moore's forehead was bony and full of character, with "bumps" of wit, large and radiant enough to transport a phrenologist. Sterne had such another. His eyes were as dark and fine as you would

wish to see under a set of vine-leaves; his mouth generous and good-humoured, with dimples; and his manner as bright as his talk, full of the wish to please and be pleased. He sang and played with great taste on the pianoforte, as might be supposed from his musical compositions. His voice, which was a little hoarse in speaking (at least I used to think so), softened into a breath, like that of the flute, when singing. In speaking, he was emphatic in rolling the letter *r*, perhaps out of a despair of being able to get rid of the national peculiarity. The structure of his versification, when I knew him, was more artificial than it was afterwards; and in his serious compositions it suited him better. He had hardly faith enough to give way to his impulses in writing, except when they were festive and witty; and artificial' thoughts demand a similar embodiment. Both patriotism and personal experience, however, occasionally inspired him with lyric pathos; and in his naturally musical perception of the right principles of versification, he contemplated the fine, easy-playing, muscular style of Dryden, with a sort of perilous pleasure. I remember his quoting with delight a couplet of Dryden's, which came with a particular grace out of his mouth:—

> "Let honour and preferment go for gold;
> But glorious beauty is n't to be sold."

Beside the pleasure I took in Moore's society

as a man of wit, I had a great esteem for him as a man of candour and independence. His letters* were full of all that was pleasant in him. As I was a critic at that time, and in the habit of giving my opinion of his works in the *Examiner*, he would write me his *opinion* of the *opinion*, with a mixture of good-humour, admission, and deprecation, so truly delightful, and a sincerity of criticism on my own writings so extraordinary for so courteous a man, though with abundance of balm and eulogy, that never any subtlety of compliment could surpass it; and with all my self-confidence I never ceased to think that the honour was on my side, and that I could only deserve such candour of intercourse by being as ingenuous as himself. This admiring regard for him he completed by his behaviour to an old patron of his, who, not thinking it politic to retain him openly by his side, proposed to facilitate his acceptance of a place under the Tories; an accommodation which Moore rejected as an indignity. I thought, afterwards, that a man of such a spirit should not have condescended to attack Rousseau and poor foolish Madame de Warens, out of a desire to right himself with polite life and with the memory of some thoughtless productions of his own. Polite life was only too happy to possess

* Some of them are given at the end of Vol. III.

him in his graver days; and the thoughtless productions, however to be regretted on reflection, were reconcilable to reflection itself on the same grounds on which Nature herself and all her exuberance is to be reconciled. At least, without presuming to judge nature in the abstract, an ultra-sensitive and enjoying poet is himself a production of nature; and we may rest assured, that she will no more judge him with harshness ultimately, than she will condemn the excess of her own vines and fig-trees.

I will now lay before the reader the letters which I had received from Lord Byron during the period of my first acquaintance with him. Other circumstances originally called for their publication; but they are of a nature not to go counter to new feelings, or rather to the renewal of the oldest and best; and they furnish also, I think, the most appropriate introduction to the resumption of my intercourse with his lordship.

LETTER I.

[*Lord Byron's Domestic Affairs and Friendships.*]

4, Bennet-street, Dec. 2nd, 1813.

My dear Sir,—Few things could be more welcome than your note; and on Saturday morning I will avail myself of your permission to thank you for it in person. My time has not been passed, since we met, either profitably or agreeably. A very short period after my last visit, an incident occurred with which, I fear, you are not unacquainted, as report in

many mouths and more than one paper was busy with the topic. That naturally gave me much uneasiness. Then, I nearly incurred a lawsuit on the sale of an estate; but that is now arranged: next—but why should I go on with a series of selfish and silly details? I merely wish to assure you, that it was not the frivolous forgetfulness of a mind occupied by what is called pleasure (*not* in the true sense of Epicurus) that kept me away; but a perception of my *then* unfitness to share the society of those whom I value and wish not to displease. I hate being *larmoyant*, and making a serious face among those who are cheerful.

It is my wish that our acquaintance, or, if you please to accept it, friendship, may be permanent. I have been lucky enough to preserve some friends from a very early period, and I hope, as I do not (at least now) select them lightly, I shall not lose them capriciously. I have a thorough esteem for that independence of spirit which you have maintained with sterling talent, and at the expense of some suffering. You have not, I trust, abandoned the poem you were composing when Moore and I partook of your hospitality in the summer? I hope a time will come, when he and I may be able to repay you in kind for the *latter*;—for the rhyme, at least in *quantity*, you are in arrear to both.

Believe me very truly and affectionately yours,

BYRON.

LETTER II.

[*Debts of the Regent—Mrs. Leigh—Mr. Brougham—Mr. Moore.*]

Dec. 22nd, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am, indeed, "in your debt,"—and, what is still worse, am obliged to follow *royal* example (he has just

apprised *his* creditors that they must wait till the meeting), and entreat your indulgence for, I hope, a very short time. The nearest relation, and almost the only friend I possess, has been in London for a week, and leaves it to-morrow with me for her own residence.—I return immediately; but we meet so seldom, and are so *minuted* when we meet at all, that I give up all engagements till *now*, without reluctance. On my return, I must see you to console myself for my past disappointments. I should feel highly honoured in Mr. B———'s* permission to make his acquaintance, and *there* you are in *my* debt—for it is a promise of last summer which I still hope to see performed. Yesterday I had a letter from Moore:—you have probably heard from him lately; but if not, you will be glad to learn that he is the same in heart, head, and health.

LETTER III.

[*Notes to the* Feast of the Poets—*Italian School of Poetry —Attacks on Lord Byron in the Newspapers.*

Feb. 9th, 1814.

My dear Sir,—I have been snow-bound and thaw-swamped (two compound epithets for you) in the "valley of the shadow" of Newstead Abbey for nearly a month, and have not been four hours returned to London. Nearly the first use I make of my benumbed fingers, is to thank you for your very handsome note in the volume you have just put forth; only, I trust, to be followed by others on subjects more worthy your notice than the works of contemporaries. Of myself, you speak only too

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* The noble poet and Lord Brougham not long afterwards met in my rooms, and seemed mutually pleased.

highly—and you must think me strangely spoiled, or perversely peevish, even to suspect that any remarks of yours, in the spirit of candid criticism, could possibly prove unpalatable. Had they been harsh, instead of being written as they are in the indelible ink of good sense and friendly admiration—had they been the harshest—as I knew and know that you are above any personal bias, at least *against* your fellow-bards—believe me, they would not have caused a word of remonstrance, nor a moment of rankling on my part. Your poem* I *redde*† long ago in the *Reflector*, and it is not much to say it is the best "*Session*" we have—and with a more difficult subject—for we are neither so good nor so bad (taking the best and worst) as the wits of the olden time.

To your smaller pieces I have not yet had time to do justice by perusal—and I have a quantity of unanswered, and, I hope, unanswerable letters to wade through, before I sleep; but to-morrow will see me through your volume. I am glad to see you have tracked Gray among the Italians. You will, perhaps, find a friend or two of yours there also, though not to the same extent; but I have always thought the Italians the *only* poetical moderns:—our Milton, and Spenser, and Shakspeare (the last through translations of their tales), are very Tuscan, and surely it is far superior to the French school. * * * Murray has, I hope, sent you my last bantling, *The Corsair*. I have been regaled at every inn on the road by lampoons and other merry conceits on myself in the ministerial gazettes, occasioned by the republication of two stanzas inserted in 1812, in Perry's paper.‡ The hysterics of the *Morning Post* are quite interesting; and I hear (but have not seen) of something

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* *The Feast of the Poets.* † Sic in MS.

‡ *Morning Chronicle.*

terrific in a last week's *Courier*—all which I take with "the calm indifference" of Sir Fretful Plagiary. The *Morning Post* has one copy of devices upon my deformity, which certainly will admit of no "historic doubts," like "Dickon my master's"—another upon my Atheism, which is not quite so clear—and another, very downrightly, says I am the *devil* (*boiteux* they might have added), and a rebel and what not:—possibly my accuser of diabolism may be Rosa Matilda; and if so, it would not be difficult to convince her I am a mere man. I shall break in upon you in a day or two—distance has hitherto detained me; and I hope to find you well and myself welcome.

Ever your obliged and sincere,

BYRON.

P.S.—Since this letter was written, I have been at your text, which has much *good* humour in every sense of the word. Your notes are of a very high order indeed, particularly on Wordsworth.

LETTER IV.

[*Lord Byron's approaching Marriage.*]

October 15th, 1814.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I send you some game, of which I beg your acceptance. I specify the quantity as a security against the porter; a hare, a pheasant, and two brace of partridges, which, I hope, are fresh. My stay in town has not been long, and I am in all the agonies of quitting it again next week on business, preparatory to "a change of condition," as it is called by the talkers on such matters. I am about to be married: and am, of course, in all the misery of a man in pursuit of happiness. My intended is two hundred miles off; and the efforts I am making with lawyers, &c. &c. to join my future connections,

are, for a personage of my single and inveterate habits—to say nothing of indolence—quite prodigious! I sincerely hope you are better than your paper intimated lately; and that your approaching freedom will find you in full health to enjoy it.

Yours, ever,

BYRON.

LETTER V.

[*Drury Lane Theatre—Parisian Correspondence—Lady Byron —The* Descent of Liberty—Lara.]

13, Piccadilly-terrace, May—June 1st, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I am as glad to hear from, as I shall be to see you. We came to town, what is called late in the season; and since that time, the death of Lady Byron's uncle (in the first place), and her own delicate state of health, have prevented either of us from going out much; however, she is now better, and in a fair way of going credibly through the whole process of beginning a family.

I have the alternate weeks of a private box at Drury Lane Theatre: this is my week, and I send you an admission to it for Kean's nights, Friday and Saturday next, in case you should like to see him quietly:—it is close to the stage—the entrance by the private box-door—and you can go without the bore of crowding, jostling, or dressing. I also inclose you a parcel of recent letters from Paris; perhaps you may find some extracts that may amuse yourself or your readers. I have only to beg you will prevent your copyist, or printer, from mixing up any of the *English* names, or *private* matter contained therein, which might lead to a discovery of the writer; and, as the *Examiner* is sure to travel back to Paris, might get him into a scrape, to say nothing of his correspondent at home. At any

rate, I hope and think the perusal will amuse you. Whenever you come this way, I shall be happy to make you acquainted with Lady Byron, whom you will find anything but a fine lady—a species of animal which you probably do not affect more than myself. Thanks for the *Mask*;—there is not only poetry and thought in the body, but much research and good old reading in your prefatory matter. I hope you have not given up your narrative poem, of which I heard you speak as in progress. It rejoices me to hear of the well doing and regeneration of the *Feast*, setting aside my own selfish reasons for wishing it success. I fear you stand almost single in your liking of *Lara:* it is natural that *I* should, as being my last and most unpopular effervescence:—passing by its other sins, it is too little narrative, and too metaphysical to please the greater number of readers. I have, however, much consolation in the exception with which you furnish me. From Moore I have not heard very lately. I fear he is a little humorous, because I am a lazy correspondent; but that shall be mended.

Ever your obliged and very sincere friend,

BYRON.

P.S.—"Politics!" The barking of the war-dogs for their carrion has sickened me of them for the present.

LETTER VI.

[*Twopenny Post—Lord Byron's opinion of Wordsworth.*]

13, Terrace, Piccadilly, Oct. 7th, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I had written a long answer to your last, which I put into the fire; partly, because it was a repetition of what I have already said—and next, because I considered what

my opinions are worth, before I made you pay double postage, as your proximity lays you within the jaws of the tremendous "Twopenny," and beyond the verge of franking—the only parliamentary privilege (saving one other) of much avail in these "costermonger days."

Pray don't make me an exception to the "Long live King Richard" of your bards in the *Feast*. I do allow him to be "prince of the bards of his time," upon the judgment of those who must judge more impartially than I probably do. I acknowledge him as I acknowledge the Houses of Hanover and Bourbon—the—not the "one-eyed monarch of the blind," but the blind monarch of the one-eyed. I merely take the liberty of a free subject to vituperate certain of his edicts—and that only in private.

I shall be very glad to see you, or your remaining canto; if both together, so much the better.

I am interrupted——

LETTER VII.

["English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.."]

Oct. 15th, 1815.

Dear Hunt,—I send you a thing whose greatest value is its present rarity;* the present copy contains some manuscript corrections previous to an edition which was printed, but not published; and in short, all that is in the suppressed edition, the fifth, except twenty lines in addition, for which there was not room in the copy before me. There are in it *many* opinions I have altered, and some which I retain; upon the whole, I wish that it had never been written, though my sending you

* A copy of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

this copy (the only one in my possession, unless one of Lady B.'s be excepted) may seem at variance with this statement:—but my reason for this is very different: it is, however, the only gift I have made of the kind this many a day.*

P.S.—You probably know that it is not in print for sale, nor ever will be (if I can help it) again.

LETTER VIII.

[*The* Story of Rimini—*History of* English Bards and Scotch Reviewers—*Lord and Lady Holland.*]

Oct. 22, 1815.

My dear Hunt,—You have excelled yourself—if not all your cotemporaries, in the canto † which I have just finished. I think it above the former books; but that is as it should be; it rises with the subject, the conception appears to me perfect, and the execution perhaps as nearly so as verse will admit. There is more originality than I recollect to have seen elsewhere within the same compass, and frequent and great happiness of expression. In short, I must turn to the faults, or what appear such to me: these are not many, nor such as may not be easily altered, being almost all *verbal*;—and of the same kind as I pretended to point out in the former cantos, viz., occasional quaintness and obscurity, and a kind of a harsh and yet colloquial compounding of epithets, as if to avoid saying common things in the common way; *difficile est proprié com-*

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* The absence of the signature to this letter, as to others, is owing to my having given it away. Letters have been given away also, or I should have had more for the reader's amusement.

† One of the cantos of the Story of *Rimini*,—I believe, the third.

munia dicere, seems a times to have met with in you a literal translator. I have made a few, and but a few, pencil marks on the MS., which you can follow or not, as you please.

The poem, as a whole, will give you a very high station; but where is the conclusion? Don't let it cool in the composition! You can always delay as long as you like revising, though I am not sure, in the very face of Horace, that the "nonum," &c., is attended with advantage, unless we read "months" for "years." I am glad the book sent* reached you. I forgot to tell you the story of its suppression, which sha'n't be longer than I can make it. My motive for writing that poem was, I fear, not so fair as you are willing to believe it; I was angry, and determined to be witty, and, fighting in a crowd, dealt about my blows against all alike, without distinction or discernment. When I came home from the east, among other new acquaintances and friends, politics and the state of the Nottingham rioters—(of which county I am a land-holder, and Lord Holland recorder of the town)—led me by the good offices of Mr. Rogers into the society of Lord Holland, who, with Lady Holland, was particularly kind to me: about March 1812, this introduction took place, when I made my first speech on the Frame Bill, in the same debate in which Lord Holland spoke. Soon after this, I was correcting the fifth edition of *E. B.* for the press, when Rogers represented to me that he knew Lord and Lady Holland would not be sorry if I suppressed any further publication of that poem; and I immediately acquiesced, and with great pleasure, for I had attacked them upon a fancied and false provocation, with many others; and neither was, nor am sorry, to have done what I could to stifle that ferocious rhapsody. This was subsequent to my

* *English Bards*, &c.

acquaintance with Lord Holland, and was neither expressed nor understood as a *condition* of that acquaintance. Rogers told me, he thought I ought to suppress it; I thought so, too, and did it as far as I could, and that's all. I sent you my copy, because I consider your having it much the same as having it myself. Lady Byron has one; I desire not to have any other; and sent it only as a curiosity and a memento.

LETTER IX.

[*Subject of Wordsworth resumed—His Mistakes about Greece —Pope's Simile of the Moon from Homer—Morbid Feelings —Drury Lane Theatre*—Story of Rimini.]

13, Terrace, Piccadilly, Sept.—Oct.* 30th, 1815.

My dear Hunt,—Many thanks for your books, of which you already know my opinion. Their external splendour should not disturb you as inappropriate—they have still more within than without.

I take leave to differ from you on Wordsworth, as freely as I once agreed with you; at that time I gave him credit for a promise, which is unfulfilled. I still think his capacity warrants all you say of *it* only—but that his performances since *Lyrical Ballads*, are miserably inadequate to the ability which lurks within him: there is undoubtedly much natural talent spilt over the *Excursion;* but it is rain upon rocks—where it stands and stagnates, or rain upon sands—where it falls without fertilizing. Who can understand him? Let those who do, make him intelligible. Jacob Behmen, Swedenborg, and Joanna

* Sic in MS.

Southcote, are mere types of this arch-apostle of mystery and mysticism? But I have done—no, I have not done, for I have two petty, and perhaps unworthy objections in small matters to make to him, which, with his pretensions to accurate observation, and fury against Pope's false translation of the "Moonlight scene in Homer," I wonder he should have fallen into:—these be they;—He says of Greece in the body of his book—that it is a land of

> "*Rivers, fertile* plains, and *sounding* shores,
> Under a cope of *variegated* sky."

The rivers are dry half the year, the plains are barren, and the shores *still* and *tideless* as the Mediterranean can make them; the sky is anything but variegated, being for months and months but "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue."—The next is in his notes, where he talks of our "Monuments crowded together in the busy, &c. of a large town," as compared with the "still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery in some *remote* place." This is pure stuff: for *one* monument in our churchyards there are *ten* in the Turkish, and so crowded, that you cannot walk between them; they are always close to the walls of the towns, that is, merely divided by a path or road; and as to "remote places," men never take the trouble, in a barbarous country, to carry their dead very far; they must have lived near to where they are buried. There are no cemeteries in "*remote* places," except such as have the cypress and the tombstone still left, where the olive and the habitation of the living have perished. * * * * * *

These things I was struck with, as coming peculiarly in my own way; and in both of these he is wrong; yet I should have noticed neither but for his attack on Pope for a like blunder, and a peevish affectation about him, of despising a popularity which he will never obtain. I write in great haste, and, I

doubt, *not* much to the purpose; but you have it hot and hot, just as it comes, and so let it go.

By the way, both he and you go too far against Pope's "So when the moon," &c.; it is no translation, I know; but it is not such false description as asserted. I have seen it on the spot: there is a burst, and a lightness, and a glow about the night in the Troad, which makes the "planets vivid," and the "pole glowing:" the moon is—at least the sky, is clearness itself; and I know no more appropriate expression for the expansion of such a heaven—o'er the scene—the plain—the sea—the sky—Ida—the Hellespont—Simois—Scamander—and the Isles,—than that of a "flood of glory." I am getting horribly lengthy, and must stop: to the whole of your letter I say "ditto to Mr. Burke," as the Bristol candidate cried by way of electioneering harangue. You need not speak of morbid feelings and vexations to me; I have plenty; for which I must blame partly the times, and chiefly myself: but let us forget them. *I* shall be very apt to do so when I see you next. Will you come to the theatre and see our new management? You shall cut it up to your heart's content, root and branch, afterwards, if you like; but come and see it! If not, I must come and see you.

Ever yours, very truly and affectionately,

BYRON.

P. S.—Not a word from Moore for these two months. Pray let me have the rest of *Rimini*. You have two excellent points in that poem—originality and Italianism. I will back you as a bard against half the fellows on whom you have thrown away much good criticism and eulogy: but don't let your book be published in *quarto*; it is the worst size possible for circulation. I say this on bibliopolical authority.

Again, yours ever,

B.

LETTER X.

[Story of Rimini—*Murray—House of Lords—Lord Byron's Politics.*

January 29th, 1816.

DEAR HUNT,—I return your extract with thanks for the perusal, and hope you are by this time on the verge of publication. My pencil-marks on the margin of your former MSS. I never thought worth the trouble of decyphering, but I had no such meaning as you imagine for their being withheld from Murray, from whom I differ entirely as to the *terms* of your agreement; nor do I think you asked a piastre too much for the poem. However, I doubt not he will deal fairly by you on the whole: he is really a very good fellow, and his faults are merely the leaven of his "trade"—"the trade!" the slave-trade of many an unlucky writer.

The said Murray and I are just at present in no good humour with each other; but he is not the worse for that. I feel sure that he will give your work as fair or a fairer chance in every way than your late publishers; and what he can't do for it, it will do for itself.

Continual laziness and occasional indisposition have been the causes of my negligence (for I deny neglect) in not writing to you immediately. These are excuses: I wish they may be more satisfactory to you than they are to me. I opened my eyes yesterday morning on your compliment of Sunday. If you knew what a hopeless and lethargic den of dulness and drawling our hospital is* during a debate, and what a mass of corruption in its patients, you would wonder, not that I very seldom speak, but that I ever attempted it, feeling, as I trust I do, indepen-

* The House of Lords.

dently. However, when a proper spirit is manifested "without doors," I will endeavour not to be idle within. Do you think such a time is coming? Methinks there are gleams of it. My forefathers were of the other side of the question in Charles's days, and the fruit of it was a title and the loss of an enormous property.

If the old struggle comes on, I may lose the one, and shall never regain the other; but no matter; there are things, even in this world, better than either.

Very truly, ever yours,

B.

LETTER XI.

[*Domestic Affairs.—Dedication of the* Story of Rimini.—*Pamphlets.*]

Feb. 26th, 1816.

Dear Hunt,—Your letter would have been answered before, had I not thought it probable that, as you were in town for a day or so, I should have seen you. I don't mean this as a hint at reproach for not calling, but merely that of course I should have been very glad if you had called in your way home or abroad, as I always would have been, and always shall be.* With regard to the circumstance to which you allude, there is no reason why you should not speak openly to me on a subject already sufficiently rife in the mouths and minds of what is called "the world." Of the "fifty reports," it follows that forty-nine must have more or less error and exaggeration; but I am sorry to say, that on the main and essential point of an

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* I was never in town "for a day or two;"—never for a longer time than I could help. I was too ill.

intended, and, it may be, an inevitable separation, I can contradict none. At present I shall say no more—but this is not from want of confidence; in the mean time, I shall merely request a suspension of opinion. Your prefatory letter to *Rimini*, I accepted as it was meant—as a public compliment and a private kindness. I am only sorry that it may, perhaps, operate against you as an inducement, and, with some, a pretext, for attack on the part of the political and personal enemies of both:—not that this can be of much consequence, for in the end the work must be judged by its merits, and in that respect you are well armed. Murray tells me it is going on well, and, you may depend upon it, there is a substratum of poetry, which is a foundation for solid and durable fame. The objections (*if* there be objections, for this is a *presumption*, and not an *assumption*) will be merely as to the mechanical part, and such, as I stated before, the usual consequence of either novelty or revival. I desired Murray to forward to you a pamphlet with two things of mine in it, the most part of both of them, and of one in particular, *written* before *others* of my composing, which have preceded them in *publication*; they are neither of them of much pretension, nor intended for it. You will, perhaps, wonder at my dwelling so much and so frequently on former subjects and scenes; but the fact is, that I found them fading fast from my memory; and I was, at the same time, so partial to their *place* (and events connected with it), that I have stamped them, while I could, in such colours as I could trust to *now*, but might have confused and misapplied *hereafter*, had I longer delayed the attempted delineation.*

* I forget what these pamphlets were. In all probability, some of the poems connected with Greece and the Levant.

LETTER XII.

[*Drury Lane Theatre.*]

March 4th, 1816.

Dear Hunt,—I send you six orchestra tickets for Drury Lane, counter-signed by me, which makes the admission *free*—which I explain, that the door-keeper may not impose upon you; they are for the best place in the house, but can only be used *one* at a time. I have left the *dates unfilled*, and you can *take* your own nights, which I should suppose would be Kean's: the seat is in the orchestra. I have inserted the name of Mr. H———,* a friend of yours, in case you like to transfer to him—do not forget to fill up the dates for such days as you choose to select.

Yours, ever truly,

Byron.

FRAGMENTS OF LETTERS,

The rest of which has been mutilated or lost.

Fragment I.

[Story of Rimini—*Sir Henry Englefield—Mrs. Leigh and the present Lord Byron—Hookham Frere.*]

——— good of *Rimini*—Sir Henry Englefield, a mighty man in the blue circles, and a very clever man anywhere, sent to Murray, in terms of the highest eulogy; and with regard to the common reader, my *sister* and *cousin* (who are now all my family, and the last since gone away to be married) were in

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* I think this was Hazlitt.

fixed perusal and delight with it, and they are "not critical," but fair, natural, unaffected, and understanding persons.

Frere, and all the arch-literati, I hear, are also unanimous in a high opinion of the poem. "I hear this by the way—but I will send."

FRAGMENT II.

[English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.—*Hazlitt on Methodism —Diseases of Poets.*]

With regard to the *E. B.* I have no concealments, nor desire to have any, from you or yours: the suppression occurred (I am as sure as I can be of anything) in the manner stated: I have never regretted that, but very often the composition—that is the *humeur* of a great deal in it. As to the quotation you allude to, I have no right, nor indeed desire, to prevent it; but, on the contrary, in common with all other writers, I do and ought to take it as a compliment.

The paper on the Methodists† was sure to raise the bristles of the godly. I *redde* it, and agree with the writer on one point in which you and he perhaps differ; that an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of "an uneasy mind in an uneasy body;" disease or deformity have been the attendants of many of our best. Collins mad—Chatterton, I think, mad—Cowper mad—Pope crooked—Milton blind—Gray (I have heard that the last was afflicted by an incurable and very grevious distemper, though not generally known)—and others——. I have somewhere *redde*, however, that poets *rarely* go mad. I suppose

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* By Hazlitt, in the *Round Table*; which was first published in the *Examiner*.

the writer means that their insanity effervesces and evaporates in verse—may be so.*

I have not had time nor paper to attack your *system*, which ought to be done, were it only because it is a *system*. So, by-and-by, have at you.

Yours, ever,

BYRON.

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* I know not who the writer was that is here alluded to; perhaps myself, probably Hazlitt, or one of many others; for I suspect the remark to have been as often made as it seems well-founded. Genius may require some delicacies of organization to refine the natural faculty; but if it were a disease, it should be oftener found to accompany disease. Hospitals, indeed, ought to be its nursery-beds, and odes and elegies traceable to fever and jaundice. A pleasant corresponding list might be drawn up on such an assumption. Madness in men of genius must originate in causes common to their fellow-creatures,—otherwise, the greater the genius the greater would be the mental aberration; which has never yet been found to be the case. Hazlitt observed, that the most mechanical understandings were more liable to such a calamity than others, because they are less accustomed to the regions of wonder and emotion, and therefore can make less allowance for the surprises they meet there.

END OF VOL. II.

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